

SPIRITUALISM IN INDIA

THEORY & PRACTICE

*[Being a collection of articles on the subject
and a summary of experiences in India
and abroad during the last twenty years]*

BY

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"Subhadra or Life after Death" (English & Hindi)

"Parlokvad" (Hindi); "Spirit Messages" (Marathi)

7223

SECOND EDITION

(Revised & Enlarged)

1946

33.90954

Ris

POPULAR BOOK DEPOT
LAMINGTON ROAD : : : BOMBAY 7

Rs. 3-12-0

Printed by B. G. Dhawale, at the Karnatak Printing Press, Chira Bazar, Bombay 2
and Published by G. R. Bhatkal for Popular Book Depot, Lamington Road,
Bombay 7

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

The present volume is my second publication the first being, "*Subhadra* or Life after Death". A glance at the contents will show that it is a summary of our experiences and activities during the last eight years in India and Abroad. The material is drawn mostly from the Bulletins of the Indian Spiritualist Society and will enable the readers to know what Spiritualism is and what it stands for. The experiences in Europe will give an idea as to how the movement is going on in England and other European countries.

The manuscript was long ready for publication but could not be brought out on account of various difficulties. The preceding book was very well appreciated and it is hoped that this will also receive the same encouragement.

Very few persons in our country take sufficient interest in this knowledge and those who are interested in it to a certain extent do not for various reasons take the trouble of giving publicity to their experiences. But if those who had some, were to come forward with courage of conviction the subject will soon become popular and wide-spread.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, the Mayor of Bombay, for the Foreword, which he has kindly written for the book.

Indian Spiritualist Society,
51, Gordhandas Building,
Girgaon, Bombay.
5th December, 1936.

V. D. RISHI

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

The first edition of the present volume was exhausted long ago and there was a persistent demand for the same. The publication was kindly undertaken by the Popular Book Depot, Bombay and I am very thankful to them for bringing out the present edition.

The book has been much enlarged with several alterations and additions, amongst which contributions from co-workers and words of appreciation by sympathisers deserve a special mention.

On account of unavoidable circumstances the book could not be published earlier and some errors in printing have remained, but I hope that the volume will be appreciated as before by all students of this Knowledge.

Indian Spiritualist Society,
51, Gordhandas Building,
Girgaon, Bombay.
4th February, 1946.

V. D. RISHI

FOREWORD

'Spiritualism in India' is the second publication of Mr. V. D. Rishi. It is a summary of his activities and experiences in India and Europe during the last eighteen years, and is being issued for the benefit of those interested in Spiritualism. Mr. Rishi's claim to enlighten the Indian public in this important matter is now based on nearly twenty five years of close study, constant thinking, extensive travel and prolonged research. In fact it can be truly said of him that he is the only authority in India on this branch of knowledge and I can sincerely say of Mr. Rishi what the late Sir A. Conan Doyle once wrote to him to say "You are the Apostle of Spiritualism and we all look upon you as the representative of the cause in India".

Few people take real interest in this science; the reasons are obvious. There is so much imposture and fraud going on about us in the name of religion and spirituality that a little scepticism is all to the good. At the same time it will be really unfortunate if we shut out all light for fear of running the risk of being duped by imposture. Little progress can be made in the acquisition of the knowledge of spirit-phenomena unless earnest and patient research is made. Unfortunately few have the necessary leisure for such prolonged attention. The result is inertia and lack of interest.

I have had several opportunities of attending Mr. and Mrs. Rishi's seances held under the auspices of the Indian Spiritualist Society, and I feel no hesitation in testifying to the genuineness of the phenomena. To those who have had no opportunities of seeing Mr. Rishi actually at work, this book should prove of great value. It narrates a multitude

of cases, as varied as they can be, of what happens to man after throwing off the mortal cage. Taken along with 'Subhadra' his first publication on the subject, the book furnishes authoritative and adequate material for initiating the reader into the truths of spirit-phenomena, and Mr. Rishi is to be congratulated on bringing out this much-needed publication.

Ridge Road,
Malabar Hill, Bombay.

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JAMNADAS M. MEHTA

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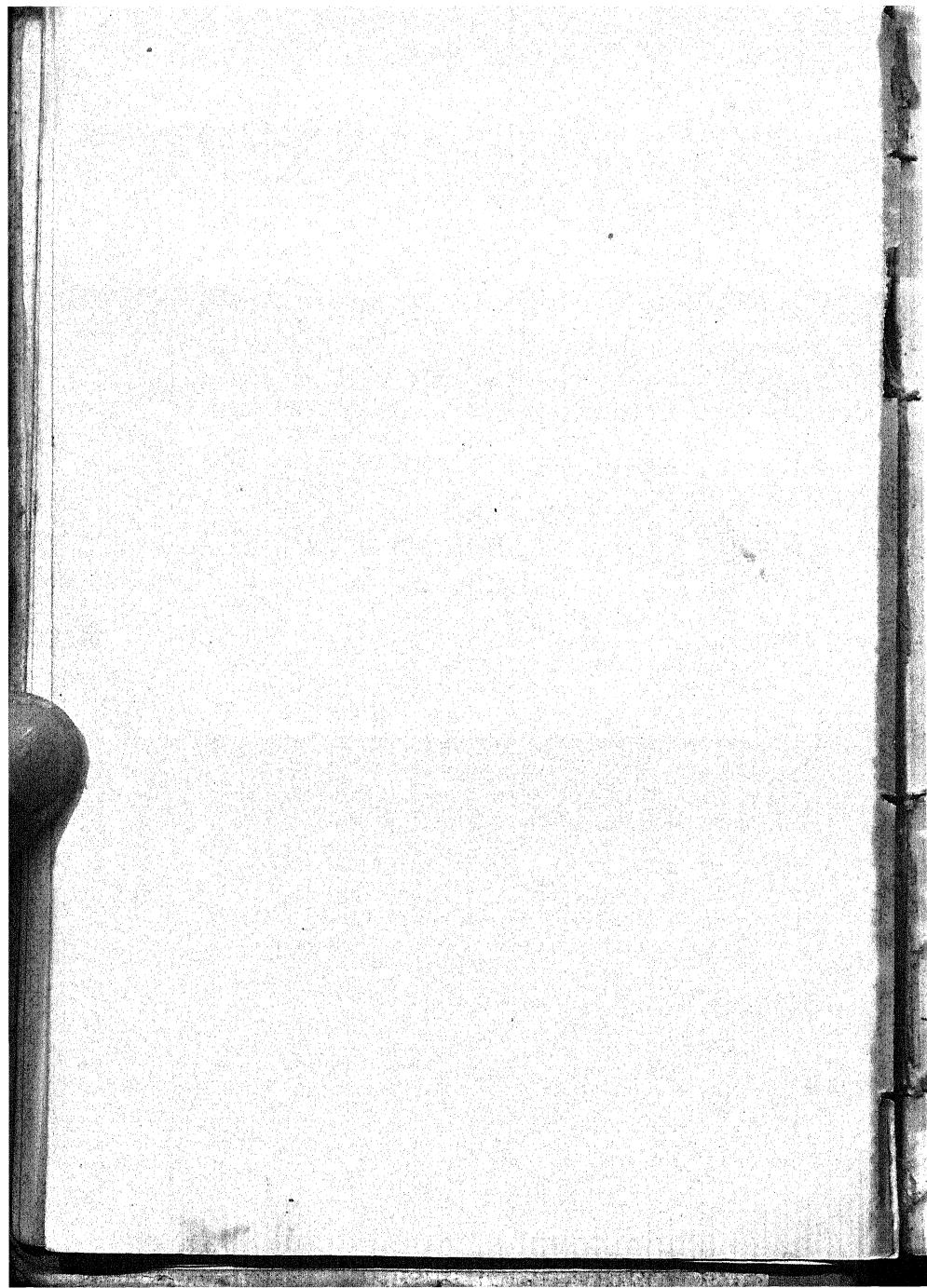
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CHAPTER I

Occasional Contributions

INTRODUCTORY

The belief in the existence of the next world and the possibility of communication with the departed souls is to be found in almost all the sacred books of the East and West. Rig- Veda the oldest book contains reference about the Pitris.

In Mahabharata and Ramayana we read how the wives of the Kauravas had the pleasure of an interview with their departed husbands and how king Dasharath manifested himself after death to Sri Ramachandra. The Bible is full of references regarding survival after death and communion between the dead and the living. Swami Vivekanand had the pleasure of coming face to face with his Guru Swami Ram Krishna after the latter's demise. To discredit all this testimony about survival after death is gross and rank materialism.

MODERN HISTORY

The 18th and 19th centuries of the Christian era were steeped in materialistic ideas denying survival after death in any form. They resembled the Charvakas of the older times whose maxim was "Eat, drink and be merry" We are aiming at the refutation of this pernicious doctrine and spiritualise the world. In the middle of the 19th century happily for the world commenced an influx of the departed souls to purify humanity. Strange manifestations were observed through remarkable Psychic powers of two young girls better known as "Fox sisters". The whole scientific world with its critical and resolute mood tried to discredit the phenomena. It was thus a moderate beginning, as every movement has in its inception and no one ever realised that it would assume such dimensions and spread throughout the world within the course

of a century. The struggle has been going on for the last 100 years and the success is in sight. This is a statement of facts as is well known to those acquainted with the history of modern Spiritualism. The phenomena of Spiritualism have now been thoroughly analysed by scientists of international reputation and by a number of University professors. The man who now denies their genuineness is simply ignorant and behind the times.

IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

The domain of psychic science is wider than that of spiritualism. It deals with several other subjects which do not come strictly under the purview of this all-important truth. Its field is both in this world as well as in the next. Etymologically speaking it means a science pertaining to the faculties of the soul. Mesmerism, Hypnotism, Telepathy, Psychometry, Mental-healing and other allied phenomena are usually included in psychic science. Spiritualism and Psychic Science are closely connected with each other. The proof regarding survival after death has been mainly obtained through the inherent psychic power of a medium and hence the phenomena of mediumship have been recognised as the basic factor of modern spiritualism. It is impossible to define or describe this power as it is not possible to define electricity or magnetism, although we all perceive their effects every day. It is no use denying their existence simply because we are not yet able to ascertain their exact nature.

Psychic research affords a very fascinating study to some persons. Indeed it is a very important branch of knowledge particularly because the admission of psychic science into the category of recognised orthodox sciences would be a great eye-opener to our materialistic friends and open an infinite field for investigation along entirely different lines. The physical and mental phenomena are the two fields for investigation in this science. Some are attracted by the former and

repelled by the latter. The personal tendencies determine their line of study. However, these fields are so closely connected that no one can form a true judgment regarding one without considering the other. The work carried on by the students of psychic science is not confined only to matters supratemporal. They utilise this knowledge in tracing out lost persons and articles, curing certain diseases without the aid of drugs and other allied mundane matters. No one would deny the value and utility of these efforts. The whole science of suggestive therapeutics is based on the existence of the psychic power in the operator. The phenomenal side of Psychic Science is also very interesting and sure to give a rude shock to hard-headed materialists.

In Europe and America several scientists have made important discoveries in this science. Some persons are aware of the discovery of ectoplasm a white snowy matter emanating from the body of the medium. However much the existence of this matter may be denied by ignorant persons and fraudulent people, it is weighed and analysed by great scientists. Ectoplasm as summed up by Dr. Geley of Paris who had made special study of these phenomena is a function of a dynamic and sensorial exteriorisation of the medium or of the ideoplastic organisation of the elements enteriorised. The astonishing consequences of this fact will revolutionise the biology of the future. Both Dr. Geley and Dr. Crawford recognised the importance of ectoplasmic manifestation in which Dr. Geley says he finds a clue to the solution of the enigma of universal life and to the relation of mind and matter. The vastness of this subject and the tremendous issues that are involved in the growth and pursuit of this knowledge will be hereby readily perceived. The discoveries of Sir J. C. Bose were hailed in India because he established the existence of life in plants. Far more important is the proof regarding the matters mentioned above.

ADVANTAGES OF SPIRITUALISM

It is sometimes asked. "What are the advantages that are likely to be derived by the spread of this knowledge?" It is no use denying the fact that death is the greatest mystery in human life. Very few persons have clear conception regarding this phenomenon and the fate that awaits a person after passing through the portals of death. Who would like to be ignorant about his destiny after the brief span of his life full of multifarious activities and troubles regarding mundane matters? Who would not like to know what actually happens when the hour strikes that closes a man's career when leaving all the gathered wealth and land he goes out into the seeming darkness alone? What patriot would not like to be sure about his own condition after rotting in jails and sacrificing his life for the country? Is death the end, the annihilation and forgetfulness or do we awake in some other sphere or condition where retaining personality we progress towards the infinite? Spiritualism claims to answer such questions beyond any possibility of refutation not by an appeal to faith but by opening up communication between the two worlds. A poet has sung that the spirit world is a place from which no traveller has returned. Spiritualism has proved that this is an erroneous belief and every day we meet and converse with them without their being reborn. Babu Motilal Ghosh has pointed out that 3/4ths of the sorrow in this world is due to the ignorance about the phenomenon of death. Is it not then of paramount importance to dispel this ignorance?

ANSWER TO MATERIALISM

As pointed out above materialism is the greatest evil of modern times. The modern educated man complacently believes that there is nothing beyond the blood and the brain in body. He distrusts the teachings in the religious texts because they do not stand the rigid test of his analytical mind.

Naturally he is led to believe in materialism and deny survival after death. The only answer to materialism is spiritualism. It is based not on any text, tradition or intuition but upon observed facts and phenomena tested in the sacred precincts of a scientific laboratory. Is it not necessary to wipe out this evil which is spreading over the country and which is fraught with such immense dangers?

The next point is the religious significance of this grand truth. Some eminent persons regard this subject merely as an aspect of scientific research and are unaware of its religious import. It is a patent fact that religions solve the problem of death and show in a clear perspective the destiny of man after this great change.

RELIGIOUS ASPECT.

From the summary of the principles of Spiritualism as given elsewhere it will be clear that it claims to demonstrate what religions proclaim but in a far more convincing way, in as much as it affords some ocular proof regarding this matter of transcendental interest. If this be not religion one fails to understand its legitimate function. It is not based only on the statements of living persons or upon any text, tradition or intuition but also upon the assertions of our dear ones who are in the next world. It is no exaggeration to say that religions are mostly petrified, overgrown with forms and choked with mysteries. Shall we not try to reform them by proving that all that is wanted is very simple and very little? We require service and love which are the watch-words of progress in this world as well as the next.

OTHER ADVANTAGES.

Some are desirous to know whether the pursuit of this knowledge will help them in their mundane affairs. The destiny of nations and individuals is several times wonder-

fully moulded and changed by unseen forces from the next world. These changes cannot be explained by any physical causes nor can we attribute any reasonable agency except the influence of the unseen forces. Our friends on the other side of death being naturally interested in our affairs are several times ready to help us provided we continue to love them and not forget them erroneously believing that they are no longer with us. There is a dictum of Sir Oliver Lodge that they (spirits) know of things far more than we do, and they can communicate with us from time to time. Shall we not try to be benefitted by their greater knowledge by lovingly communicating with them?

We revere the memory of our great men. Large sums are spent in erecting memorials to perpetuate their names; of their anniversaries are celebrated with great pomp and solemnity. Learned lectures are delivered eulogising their virtues and valour; but we are hardly aware of their continued existence and interest in us, apart from the religious beliefs. Is it not of paramount interest to let our countrymen know that instead of merely revering the memory of these great men they should try to get into touch with them by modern methods?

SPIRITUALISM AS JOINING LINK.

The attitude of the scientists and orthodox persons is very strange and difficult to understand. The former fight shy of this knowledge on account of their self-inflicted boundaries of materialism; while the latter are amazed at the new methods of spirit intercourse. In fact, both these sets of persons ought to join us in our quest; the former, because it opens to them a new field for enquiry along strictly scientific lines, while the latter ought to hail our efforts with great enthusiasm as they will find in spiritualism a formidable ally, which will restore religion to its former pedestal vanquishing materialism its greatest enemy. Scientific congresses and religious confe-

rences are usually at loggerheads, as both of them cannot find a common resting ground in either. Spiritualism will be the joining link for both, and at last bring about the much desired union between science and religion. Eminent men working along most exacting scientific methods have discovered the next world, peopled with those who have lived on this earth, and with courage of conviction have given us the result of their research and dignified this philosophy.

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PRINCIPLES

The knowledge regarding life after death is commonly called Spiritualism. Its principles though as old as humanity are being proved by new methods. As affirmed by the International Congresses in Europe they are :—

1. Existence of God, supreme Intelligence and first cause of every thing.
2. Existence of the soul, linked during earthly life to the physical corruptible body by an intermediary element called perisprit or fluid body.
3. Immortality of the soul and its continual evolution towards perfection by successive stages.
4. The possibility of communication, by mediums between the visible and the invisible, namely, between the living and the dead.
5. Individual and collective responsibility between all creatures according to the law of Causality and retributive Justice.

It will be worth while to bear in mind that the above principles are not based on any text, tradition, or institution, but upon observed facts and phenomena. Much misconception prevails regarding this knowledge of vital importance and the sooner it is removed, the better it will be in the interests of humanity.

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DO SPIRITS EXIST ?

Human survival after death is admitted in all the scriptures of the East as well as the West, and is the essential principle underlying all religions. The ideas and the ways of expressing them may differ but the fact is not denied by the followers of any faith. Only the materialists are opposed to this view which is subversive of all current ideas regarding life and the world. The scientists of today are desperately trying to maintain that death is the annihilation of human personality, but they are fast losing their ground before the onslaught of spiritualist phenomena.

Although the belief in human survival and the immortality of the soul is very common and amounts almost to intuition it is very hazy and inaccurate. The majority of persons believe that the soul does survive, but they are quite ignorant of its nature. It cannot be defined or described, and its nature is shrouded in deep mystery. The Upanishads which deal with this point have always given a negative definition saying that it is not this or that, like the Karta in a joint Hindu family.

Mere faith in these matters based on certain texts of doubtful antiquity is of little avail, and in this age of scientific research one should, if possible, try to get some evidence that would appeal to one's senses and understanding. Before proceeding to discuss the evidence demonstrating the fact of human survival it is necessary to define the term spirit which is very often confused with soul. In spiritualistic terminology "SPIRIT" means the etheric body of an individual having all his characteristics. A clear distinction must be drawn and borne in mind between the terms "SOUL" and "SPIRIT". The former is vague and intangible without any size or form while the latter is the exact counterpart of the physical

portion of the individual. This distinction should never be lost sight of in considering the evidence recorded in seances.

✓ The proofs regarding the existence of the etheric body are so strong and convincing that any sane man is bound to accept them. The phenomena have been proved to the hilt, but each person thinks that the case should be proved 'de novo' simply because he has asked for evidence. All the experiments beginning from the elementary phenomenon of table turning down to that of materialisation have demonstrated that the etheric body survives after death and can under certain conditions communicate with those who are living on earth. But they cannot be demonstrated at one's sweet will, as spiritualism is based on observation rather than experiment.

It would be impossible to go through a regular course of experimentation in this branch of knowledge as is done in physics or chemistry. In the natural sciences we operate on brute matter, manipulating it at will, and with almost a certainty of producing a given effect; in spiritualism, on the contrary, we have to deal with intelligences who have their liberty, and who constantly prove to us that they are not subject to our commands. It is consequently necessary to await the occurrence of the phenomena, holding ourselves in readiness to observe them when they occur.

Let those who deny the existence of spirits calmly consider the mass of evidence that has been assiduously collected by the students of psychic research. The facts observed by them can be explained only by the spirit hypothesis, which alone affords a reasonable solution of the phenomena. Making allowance for every possible error in observation or fraud on the part of certain unscrupulous persons, there undoubtedly remains a residue of facts which can and ought to be attributed to spirit agency. Those who see nothing beyond the material universe and regard all intel-

lectual qualities as the secretion of the brain will find in it much material for reflection. Let them not in their conservatism shut out the evidence that can be obtained through new channels. Huxley when requested to attend the experiments in psychic phenomena refused to do so stating that they did not interest him, while Spencer had decided against them on "a priori" grounds. However great these men might have been in their own sphere of knowledge, their attitude towards psychic research, to say the least, was most unreasonable and unscientific. Other scientists realising the great importance of this neglected branch of knowledge devoted their time and energy to the study of the phenomena, and boldly declared their reality. Let us follow in their footsteps and make researches for the ascertainment of this truth which is of vital importance to humanity.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUALISM.

It is a strange irony of fate that the importance of spirit communion and all what spiritualism stands for should be necessary to be impressed upon our countrymen, when once we had this knowledge to a pre-eminent extent. In fact, it is commonly believed that India is nothing if not spiritual. But it must be distinctly pointed out that however advanced our forefathers might have been in this knowledge, it is now practically lost to us, and we are sadly lagging behind in this which was our special heritage. The world at the present stage of its evolution, wants knowledge and not mere belief. Faith has done incalculable mischief and naturally is discarded by those who are critical and take reason as their guide.

The essential function of spiritualism is to demonstrate the continuity of life after death and the possibility, nay, the desirability of communication with those who are gone over.

Its ultimate object is to bring about the moral amelioration of mankind and to ensure our happiness in the world hereafter. To us who have investigated this branch of knowledge, it is an unchallengeable truth and cannot be doubted save by those who are blind to all psychic phenomena, and will not believe the testimony of even their own senses.

But it may be asked, as is often done by very many critics. "What is the good of all these efforts? Is not the present world enough for our activities and purposes? Why disturb the dead from their peaceful slumber?" Some imperitently say that we are concerned more with the living than with the dead. Such a mentality betrays their abysmal ignorance about this knowledge of transcendental importance.

Even among the leaders of thought in the country there is so much misunderstanding about this vital truth, that their very ignorance makes one feel the urgent necessity of spreading the knowledge in India. Religions, being over-grown with forms and choked with mysteries, need to be vitalised with the new revelation which is the fountain-head and essence of all Faiths. Misconceptions regarding immediate return or resting in graves till the Judgment Day have made the proper understanding of the subject extremely difficult and these points need to be clearly explained for presenting the facts observed in psychic research.

Those who have the world too much with them and possess only a circumscribed vision of it may safely be allowed to remain in their blessed ignorance. But the aspirant to knowledge and light will find new vistas of glorious vision before them and a vast unexplored region deserving our best attention and research. To them it will be a great consolation to learn that their friends on the other side of life are not only not disturbed by our attempts to communicate with them but on the other hand feel encouraged by the touch with

those whom they love. They yearn to communicate with us, but the barriers of our ignorance and indifference render their efforts difficult if not futile. In all the seances it is the uniform experience that the spirits are eager to talk with their friends on earth. In fact they as it were vie with one another in seizing the rare opportunity afforded to them in a seance and often struggle for precedence. Shall we not co operate with them and facilitate their efforts to pierce the veil that separates us from them ?

The main purpose of the spiritualist movement is not yet grasped by many persons. They think that its only object is to give some consolation to bereaved persons by restoring communication between two death divided souls. In an expectancy circle that is the main object. But it should not end there.

The great significance of the new spiritualist movement, the coming of spirit-people into touch with those whom they have left behind is not only to afford proof of the continuity of personality and life after death, not only to prove that these discarnate human beings are near to comfort and to guide us, but above all to open our minds to knowledge and our souls to righteousness.

The desire to get into touch with the beloved dead leads one to approach this subject. But we should not dwell too long on mere association with the loved one. We must both progress ; and that is one of the reasons why sometimes we do not get any messages. There are higher guides interfering and one should not seek to impose our will on theirs in such matters.

To hold seances only for the pleasure of speaking to one's departed friends is to misunderstand the purpose of breaking through the veil that separates the spiritual from the material and if we do not fully grasp this point we may be prevented

from discourse by higher spirits or if we burgle into it we may do ourselves some serious harm. Hence we must learn the laws of the spirit and follow them.

The recognised religions ought to welcome and encourage this knowledge enthusiastically ; but the apathy and ignorance shown concerning this spiritual knowledge by many of the leaders of religion is as deplorable as it is hard to understand. They of all men should be the first to consider the phenomena as they bring to them actual proofs of personal survival and of so much else which they have themselves affirmed. For centuries they have been worsted in their fight with the sceptics who reasonably demand proofs instead of texts. Spiritualism at last brings them those proofs so that these can meet the scientist upon his grounds, but instead of recognition or gratitude the orthodox people as it were fight shy of this knowledge and turn away from that spiritual help and inspiration which this new revelation brings with it. Let us hope for the day when they will realize the fact of human survival with all its implications.

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SPIRITUALISTIC PHENOMENA AND PUBLIC OPINION.

There seems to be much misconception regarding Spirit-communication and the phenomena observed through psychic research. Ignorant critics and obstinate negationists have in and out of season added to this misconception and have tried to lead the public away from the true principles of this subject. It is worthwhile to state at the outset that this knowledge is based on observations rather than upon experiments and those who demand scientific control and proofs as those obtained in Physical Sciences do not consider that mediumship, whatever its origin and nature, is not a mechanical function like that of a physical apparatus.

It is based on psychism and it cannot be claimed that the actions of consciousness, of automatism or of subconsciousness will take place under fixed conditions to which only a machine of iron or wood can be indifferent.

The phenomena cannot be controlled or commanded, and the more important ones occur especially when they are not asked for or expected. It is idle, therefore, to throw out challenges to the students of this science and question their experiences. Too much has been said regarding the offer of a big prize in certain papers. It is very easy to put up such a big reward on quite unacceptable terms and to pose as genuine seekers after truth. Will anybody reproduce an astronomical phenomena by the lure of any fabulous reward? One has to wait and observe them when they occur and form the hypotheses explaining them. At present, the students of Psychism have come to the conclusion that the existence of spirits and their efforts to produce the phenomena are quite acceptable as a working hypothesis of this knowledge. To them the evidence is conclusive and sufficient to justify their claim. If it does not satisfy them, they are free to hold their own opinions any way they like and to make further research.

We have around us an ever-increasing number of well-trained intellects keenly interested in the phenomena of Metapsychism. But these people are, nearly all, absolutely materially unable to abandon their professional careers as lawyers, doctors, etc., in order to devote all their time to this, in some respects, most ungrateful study of Mediumship.

Today the whole research depends upon individual efforts financially aided by some persons interested in this knowledge. The critics will do well to study the vast literature on this subject containing the evidence of numerous investigators before venturing to level their attacks in the manner they are doing.

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PSYCHIC RESEARCH AND RELIGION

The close connection of religion with psychic research can never be overemphasized. The majority of persons who approach this subject either out of curiosity or with a view to obtain some consolation in their bereavement hardly realize its implications and religious importance. The attitude of some men who exclaim "It will be time enough to think of the next world when we get there," represents in an extreme form the sort of feeling with which we look upon the subject that is being earnestly investigated in some circles and violently hated in others. Some piously orthodox persons look upon psychic research and spiritualistic enquiry with a sort of dread mainly on the ground that it is an unwarranted intrusion into the secrets which would be better left a sealed book until we get there. The basic assumption throughout those enquiries is that they are unnecessary and meddlesome interferences with what for the present does not concern us. In short they are regarded as "Curious Arts".

It is true that some of the greatest minds have approached this field of research with a hope that facts will come to light of such character that survival of conscious intelligence after the death of the body will no longer be a matter solely depending upon faith but a scientifically demonstrable truth. The possibility of intercourse with the discarnate intelligence will always be the goal for which the psychical researchers will strive as the physicists have been doing to demonstrate the ultimate continuity of the laws governing the immaterial world. With many persons it is an established fact, but what is not always seen in the tremendous issue involved in the knowledge that has come to light and has been placed on a fairly secure basis. Whether it concerns us or not to know about the conditions of our departed friends, it does without doubt concern us to know about our own in the great beyond.

The vital question which psychical research has solved is that we are spiritual beings and have a source of inspiration which is not given to us by the physical senses. Such an enquiry is not a thing so entirely concerned with the other world that it may be left till we get there, for, with it is bound up the whole question of the possibility of real religious experience.

Most of the spiritually minded persons have a tendency to limit the manifestation of the workings of a hidden power to certain epochs and personalities and to leave the rest in the hands of the physicists. The result of this attitude of mind is reflected today to a greater extent with more serious consequences than we are prone to realise. Prayer and worship with all their adjuncts become merely an emotional appeal by the worshippers to their own moral senses. Enclosed within the prison walls of our senses, we are to imagine for ourselves a God with whom we have no direct intercourse, and to serve Him in accordance with the principles derived by ourselves from the historical records of the past.

Though strange, it is true that some of the most important discoveries have been the by-products in the attempts to obtain some other coveted object. Columbus started on his hazardous voyage with the idea to find out the way to India but discovered a new continent. Instances like these can be multiplied to any extent and it may be pointed out that my quest for Subhadrabai's after-death condition led me to this knowledge of transcendental importance.

By a remorseless chain of reasoning, religion becomes "Morals tinged with emotion." It is not proposed to discuss here whether the position is satisfactory, but let us ask ourselves whether such restricted subjectivities can be correctly called a real religious experience. Any experience to be called real must be in some sense a revelation, that is a contact with

an objective fact, by which is meant an entity which is not wholly comprised within the conscious subjectivity of the person experiencing it. Otherwise, it would be mere reflection. The supreme question, the answer to which will largely determine the nature of religious experience, is whether we do in religious matter come into contact with a reality which can be compared to the reading of a sensational news in a daily paper or the injury caused to us by some accident.

Since God is greater than ourselves, as admitted by all religions, there must be experimental theology as there is an experimental physics or an experimental psychology. To constitute a valid experience there must be a contact of mind with something which is beyond itself. It may be realised as the expansion of self or a meeting with an unseen friend, but at any rate it must be beyond the range of our normal consciousness and capable of giving a new outlook to the mind. Essentially it must be of the nature of a revelation.

Is such experience a possibility? The physical sciences have answered the question for the most part in terms of materialism, as they regard life a series of fermentations and consciousness as a highly evolved process consequent on chemical changes in the human brain. The reply of orthodox theology is that God has spoken in the past and that light has been given to us in sufficient quantity. We need not enquire about the why and how of the inter-subjective intercourse.

Psychic research alone has brought to light facts challenging the conclusions of the former and paving the way for a new life that may yet be infused into the dry bones of the latter. In its endeavours to get into touch with the dear departed it has incidentally unearthed a continent of marvels and brought forth new facts which are capable of infinite possibilities, in religion and science.

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WHY I BELIEVE IN PERSONAL IMMORTALITY

It is now more than two decades since I commenced the study of spiritualism, and the public are well aware of my activities for the furtherance of this knowledge in India. My interest in this subject was aroused by the death of my wife Subhadrabai; and I yearned to know whether it was possible to get into touch with her and to know something about her welfare. After great efforts and keen disappointments I claim to have succeeded in my attempt, and I venture to say that the experience of one individual will serve as a guide to those who might be in the same predicament. It must be made clear at the outset that by immortality I mean, not simply the survival of the soul after death, as is commonly believed, but that of the etheric body possessing memory, love, hatred and all the characteristics which are the essential parts of an individual. Many people lose sight of this basic principle of the continuity of life after death and erroneously regard that the vague and nebulous something which survives after death and is commonly called the soul is either immediately reborn in some physical organism, or is merged into the infinite ocean of life wherein its identity is entirely lost. Very few persons are aware of the exact nature of this change after death and it is very necessary to make continued and persistent efforts to educate the people about this matter. They are surprised to hear that there is a way by which they can get into touch with their dear departed ones, and regard the description about the next world as a fairy tale. No amount of argumentation influences them and they pertinaciously cling to their erroneous views based upon misinterpretation of a few texts in sacred books of doubtful antiquity.

The evidence which has encouraged me to propound this grand truth and in several respects a revolutionary idea, is so strong that I cannot but believe it. Most of the testimony is

obtained from my wife, and it is not possible to lay the whole of it before public scrutiny. No useful purpose would be served by such an exposure which would simply tickle the fancy of an ignorant critic. But I would most emphatically say that I have been quite convinced about her continued existence and unabated love. She is my most frequent communicator and much of the information which I have gathered about the other world has been received from her. The theories of subliminal self and telepathy would not explain the voluminous messages which I received from her. The touch which she has with this world is intermittent and not continuous, and hence she is unaware of the things which happened during her absence. Besides her messages, there are other proofs also of her existence and identity, such as her photograph which I could get in a seance (a sitting for spirit phenomena) in London and her vision to some clairvoyant mediums. She is regular in her visits and almost every morning I have the pleasure of having a talk with her.

Besides my wife, other relations of mine who are in the other world had also occasionally come and communicated with me. My eagerness to talk with them is in no way less than the desire to communicate with her, but somehow I find that their visits are not so frequent, and the messages are short as compared with hers. When I asked my father about this point, he said: "Do not think that I have forgotten you, or my love has in any way diminished. You may be led to think like that, but as I learn everything about you from her (Subhadra-bai) I do not come so often."

The other world or better still, life after death seems to be very similar to physical existence. Of course there are differences in the two stages but there are many common points also. The discarnate human beings have a subtle body which is the counterpart of this physical vehicle and is to them as

real and substantial as the latter was while living. They are engaged in some work which is determined according to their tendencies and the laws of the next world. Love, memory, and intellectual attainments are carried over, and they are not lacking in humour also. They simply sleep here and wake up in the etheric regions which seem to be concentric circles surrounding the earth. It is difficult to give an exact idea of their location in earthly measurement, but usually we are told that they are seven in number, and the spirituality of a spirit determines his stay in a particular region. No religion is favoured, nor is there any vicarious atonement. Love and disinterested service of humanity are the watch-words of progress and ensure an individual's happiness in those regions.

Communication, though possible, is not easy, and one would surely be disappointed if one were to insist upon a particular proof of identity without minding the laws of spirit intercourse. We have repeatedly found out that invisible friends cannot be controlled or commanded, and it would be idle to suppose that they would care to answer our questions which are prompted by mere curiosity or ridicule. It cannot be denied that all the replies are not correct, but making allowance for every objection and argument, we still find some incontrovertible proof suggesting the spirit hypothesis. Those who deny our claims are generally to be found amongst persons who have never studied the subject, or attended a sufficient number of seances, and have fantastic notions about life after death.

Lastly, I would like to discuss the oft-repeated question, whether we are not wasting our time and energy upon a dubious enquiry which may not yield any fruit or the reasons for which may be quite disproportionate to the labours required for such a research. To those who seriously ask this question I can only say in the words of the great

Russian savant Count Aksakoff that life on earth can have no higher aspiration than to demonstrate the transcendental nature of man's being.

But there is another class of objectors who want to know whether it is possible to derive any earthly benefit by the pursuit of this knowledge. They fail to understand that the essential function of spiritualism is the moral amelioration of mankind and the spirits are allowed to have intercourse with us mainly with a view to ensure our happiness in the hereafter. Those who commercialize this knowledge will be sadly disappointed and will not get the very thing which they are seeking through it. Spiritualism is a universal religion, and affords a common platform, for all nations to meet together irrespective of any creed or nationality. Let us try to study it in a truly liberal spirit and imbibe the glorious teachings of the knowledge.

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INDIRECT EVOCATIONS.

Any phenomena which cannot be explained normally is always puzzling, the more so when it transcends the known physical laws. The position becomes greatly complicated when another factor—viz. the intervention of unseen entities is introduced, or has to be admitted for want of any other rational explanation. The communications received in indirect evocations, the manner in which they are obtained and the method employed for these attempts leave no doubt in the mind of any reasonable inquirer regarding the genuineness of the phenomena and the presence of a discarnate entity. The experiments are held under test conditions leaving no room for doubt or disbelief of any kind, and the irresistible conclusion follows as a natural corollary from all the recorded observations. They form a very interesting and instructive branch of study

deserving serious consideration before passing any judgement about inference to be drawn therefrom.

The usual way in which these indirect evocations are held is to think most seriously about the spirit whose presence you want at the seance, and await patiently his arrival. The discarnate person need not be known to the sitters, who desire him at a particular place. Their thought—force coupled with the desire of the spirit often induces him to respond to the invocation and express his ideas to the individuals who seek his presence. The communications received on such occasions are so characteristic that none but a purblind man will deny their authenticity. They are not always full of evidential matter nor do they often contain the replies to the test questions of the persons known to the spirits, but the internal evidence, however meagre, is sufficient to justify a belief in the presence of a particular entity. The problem can be easily solved if we bear in mind the difficulties experienced by the spirit-friends in expressing their ideas to those on the earth-plane. W

Experiments of the above kind are often tried by us and we feel no hesitation in proclaiming our belief in the communications received on these occasions. The attempts are usually made in the morning after our daily talks with Subhadrabai. The name of the spirit to be invoked and its relation with the person seeking communication with it are sufficient for the purpose.

The sincerity and the integrity of the sitters are the *sine qua non* both for the appearance of the spirits as well as the authenticity of the communications. They must make this effort systematically and not in a slipshod manner. If the regular visits of Subhadrabai for the morning talks are wonderful phenomena, her helping in these attempts is still more astonishing as has been demonstrated on several occa-

sions. Although the spirits come of their own accord, she sometimes acts as their interpreter when they are unable to express their ideas in the languages known to us. She gives their descriptions at the close of the seance which are often confirmed by the persons related to the spirits. When the desired spirit does not respond at a particular seance she indicates the matter and advises us to make the attempt on the next day. We have literally to grope in the dark for getting into touch with an unknown spirit who, really speaking, favours us with his presence in response to our invocation. It should not be imagined that the process is an easy one, and we have simply to invoke a spirit and get him at the first attempt. In fact, the task at times becomes so tiresome that we have to leave it although we are eagerly waiting to get the necessary information at the earliest opportunity. It is no use getting excited also when the spirit fails to communicate as quickly as desired, because we have often realised that there is a distinct improvement in writing when we treat them with politeness and respect.

Various theories may be brought forward to explain the above phenomena and the communications received in this way. Exaggeration, error of judgement, if not deliberate fraud may also be suggested; but we need take no notice of them when we are working with all sincerity. We must frankly admit that regarding the *modus operandi* of the phenomena we know nothing, and we have to find a working hypothesis for the facts observed in such experiments. An ignorant critic will very readily argue that the communications may be the products of our subconscious or unconscious self. The argument about the submerged strata of the human mind, and of secondary personality is the sheet-anchor of most of the critics of this knowledge. They bring forward this explanation when any other fails to apply. They attribute almost

superhuman powers to the unconscious mind in their enthusiasm to deny the spiritualistic hypothesis. It would be an interesting case for an alienist to study our mental structure, for he will have to impute powers unknown to us, which are, as it were awakened by a magic-wand during the seance. He will have to hold that our personality is metamorphosed the moment we invoke a particular spirit and we inherit all his ideas and anxieties without his presence. The strangest part is that we feel quite helpless unless these unseen entities favour us with their visits, when only we get a few glimpses about them. They cannot be controlled or commanded, and had the results been due to some strata of our mind, we ought to get uniform experiences every time. Perhaps these pseudo-psychologists will bring forth some queer explanation for the alleged phenomena. But I can only say, what Prof. Morselli has so forcibly stated, that we must save psychology from their infestation and depredation.

Another plausible argument that may be suggested in this connection is that as a result of the concentration on such occasions, we might be creating a thought-form that has got all the semblance of the real individual. A little reflection will show that a thought-form thus created cannot have the ideas of an individual and the form without the essential substance is like a body without the life-giving principle. No amount of deep-concentration will vitalise a form and change it in-to a real individual.

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LIFE BEYOND THE VEIL

Very few people discuss the question of death, and the fate of the individual passing through its portals. They think that their duty towards the dead ends either by burning or burying him ceremoniously according to the prescribed rites.

The more orthodox would regularly perform the religious ceremonies enjoined by the scriptures, and have the satisfaction of facilitating the onward march of the individual. Some may perpetuate his memory by erecting a statue or a monument, but few try to unravel the mystery of death and get some glimpses of that unexplored region.

The students of Psychic Science have collected a mass of information about this matter of vital importance which is sure to revolutionise many of our ideas regarding after-death conditions. The material is obtained directly from those in that state of existence and is based not on any text, tradition or intuition but upon observed facts and phenomena. It has been tested by the rules of logic and reason. The uniformity of statements received in many lands lends support to their authenticity and clearly shows that they are not the products of the imagination of the mediums through whom they are delivered. The main consideration for the credibility of this information is the identity of a particular spirit and his power of observation. When this is fairly established there should be no difficulty in relying upon his statements about the conditions in the other world. It cannot be said that they are truthful about verifiable matters, but are unworthy of credit when asked about the conditions prevailing in their own habitation.

In order to understand the description of the spirit-world as given by the spirits, it would be necessary to know the exact meaning of the term "Spirit." It is not the Atma which is a vague and indescribable something, without any form or limbs. In spiritualistic terminology a spirit means an etheric-bodied individual having the same ideas and tendencies and retaining his individual characteristics. The etheric body is an exact double of the physical sheath with all its limbs and features. It is for this reason that a spirit-photograph resembles the

One taken during the life-time of the individual and can be unmistakably recognised. It is not the photograph of the soul of that individual but of his etheric body, which to him is as real and substantial as the physical is to us. This is the uniform statement of all spirits in different lands.

✓ They state that death is painless, meaning thereby that the process of death is like going to sleep. An individual passing over into the other world is just the same man five minutes after death as he was before; and all his characteristics along with his thought, love and memory remain unchanged. The cloud of illness disappears and the individual feels a sort of relief by the change. A spirit once said "We feel the change as a serpent might do when he has left the slough." The discarnate individual can see his friends and relations in flesh and is greatly pained to see them mourning for him. He tries to prove his existence in various ways to earthly beings, by keeping his astral arm on their shoulders and tries to console them; but within a short time he realises the futility of his attempts as the touch of his astral arms cannot be perceived by those on the spot where he might have died. His astral body has got all the limbs of the physical one and the defects, if there be any, no longer continue in the etheric body. A lame or blind man would not have the deformity under which he was labouring during the physical existence. Similarly, if a man is wounded by weapon or blown by a cannon-ball it would have no effect on his astral body. Death is only the separation of the etheric body from the physical which is decomposed after the transition, when the vital elements have passed away from the latter. After this change, the individual gets experiences according to his actions here on earth. While trying to console his mourning relatives, he has also to adapt his mind to the new surroundings. The dying experiences recorded in the seances throw much light upon the mystery of

death and enable us to know the feeling of different individuals at the time of death.

These messages enable us to know the feelings of the individuals at the beginning of the transition. Sometimes they visit their friends and relatives at a distance who are quite struck by such visions. Numerous cases of such visions have been recorded by careful investigators and they go to show the veridity of the phenomena. Students of this knowledge can find them, recorded in the annals of the Psychic Research Society or in the books of learned men like Camille Flammarion. It seems that the individual can at this moment easily materialise his etheric body on account of his ardent desire to communicate with his relations. He cannot manage to do so later on, as we find during the observations in the seances. It is uniformly stated that the individual has to stay in one of the planes of the next world and it is important to note that the number is usually said to be seven all over the world.

It is difficult to give the location of these planes; but they have been stated to be concentric circles surrounding our Globe. The sprituality of the individual determines his stay in the higher planes and the spirits assert, that they can visit the higher or lower planes, if necessary, although they are not allowed to stay in them. Several times, the distance of their planes from our world is given by the denizens of those regions according to their knowledge, but it seems that it cannot be stated according to our earthly measures. After his entry in the other world, the individual has to suffer in some way or other, for his actions while on earth. The punishment is very severe and very certain, as averred by those who had to undergo that ordeal. It seems that the law works automatically and there is no judge or jury to try them. A villain and a saint, cannot stay together in those regions and are allotted different places. If things were to be otherwise, there would

be no justice in God's creation and there would be a perversion of His power. It is confirmed by the messages received from the other world that justice and truth are not meant for this world only but also have their sway in the Spirit-world. The punishment is inflicted for the reformation of the individual, but it is not eternal. The condemned souls can improve by the advice of the higher ones, who take delight in disinterestedly working for the former's elevation. Usually a new comer is puzzled to find things very much like those on earth, and inconsistent with his previous ideas. This bewilderment, is greatly due to his ignorance regarding the conditions in the other world; and it would indeed be a blessing to humanity to popularise this knowledge, so that it may be useful to one when he goes over there.

Discarnate beings are required to be under the supervision of some higher individuals, whom the Hindu spirits call Gurus and others name Governors. Whatever the designation may be, the fact is there and the difference in name is insignificant. They cannot violate their orders. Any transgression on their part leads to severe punishment. Generally such a violation is impracticable as the supervision is very strict. It is meant for the welfare of the individuals themselves and one of the punishments is to send them back to the physical plane. The spirits are usually averse to return to earth and have to do so only out of compulsion or as a result of their own actions.

There are some who state that they need nutrition and clothes. They are, of course, made of the fine form of matter of which their bodies are composed. The physical particles being non-existent in the etheric regions, the component parts of such things cannot be made of the earthly atoms. They are mysteriously provided with such things and are not required to purchase them as a humorous critic may be led to ask. It

is impossible to pursue this description too far, as it would lead to endless questions which are sometimes not answered by the spirits. The photographs of spirits go to show that they have all the necessary things there, otherwise these pictures would have been obtained in a nude state.

The individual passes through a period of rest which varies with different spirits. Communications have been obtained even a few hours after death which show that it is difficult to fix this interval of rest and unconsciousness. They then mind their duties which are determined according to their tendencies before death. They seem to be so busy that they have hardly any time to waste or to sit gossiping with their friends. The life in the spirit-world seems to be very orderly and regular. The next region is uniformly stated by all spirits to be a very beautiful land incomparably superior to the Earth. Their opinion is very reliable, in as much as they have experience of both the worlds. The daily life of the spirits can be gathered from the descriptions which they have given from time to time. Sometimes they give a detailed account of their daily routine in the spirit-world.

Some spirits have stated that they have to get up early in the morning, offer prayer to the Almighty, visit the temples, read books, take their food and pass most of their time in meditation. In some individual cases, the spirits are required by the Guru to do additional prayers and worship which they have to perform with great regularity. It seems that they are all the while engrossed in spiritual matters, and have to obtain permission from the Guru for visiting particular place. The daily life of all spirits is not of a uniform character but is determined according to the individual attainments. A statesman who was busy throughout his life in guiding the destinies of his country is not expected to be engaged in simply offering

prayers or practising Japa. He is occupied in some active work for the uplift of his country. Similar messages have been received in different lands showing their interest in the country where they lived. A noted General once expressed his deep concern for the welfare of England, and warned his countrymen to be on their guard. They can influence the affairs of this world, by suggesting thoughts to those who are in a position to do some active work. Religious ideas being unchanged for a considerable period, the individual offers his prayers in his own way as he was wont to do while living. That is the reason why a Hindu spirit writes about temples and a Muslim about Namaz in the next world.

The messages from the other world go to show that it is the counterpart of the earth, and most of the earthly things are found there. The maxim 'As above so below' gives in a nutshell an idea about that region; and hence we find that there are houses, schools, gardens and several other things, corresponding to those on earth. Those in higher regions take delight in informing the lower ones, and the greatest joy of heaven, as described by a spirit, is emptying hell. The differences in sex continue, though not in the grosser physical sense. Marriage and procreation are not to be found there and all the addition is from the physical plane. The supervision of the higher ones is beneficial and highly conducive to their uplift. The propensities of lower nature compel the spirits to return to earth-plane where only they can be satisfied. Their touch is intermittent with us and they know, only those things which they have seen or can tell about scenes which they might have witnessed. They are not all-powerful or all-knowing, although their vision is widened by the entry into the next world. They have got greater facility in going from one place to another, but cannot be present at both, at one and the same time. Children grow and the older spirits return to normal

age by a process of rejuvenation. Love unites two souls together and such loving spirits are also found to stay in one abode. Earthly prejudices, orthodoxy and bigotry gradually disappear on the disillusionment following death. Several times, a murdered individual is found to insist upon avenging the crime; but there are instances of reconciliation also between two persons who were at logger-heads while living.

They seem to be ignorant about transcendental matters such as the object of the Universe, or the memory of the previous lives. A spirit when once asked about these matters. expressed his utter inability to solve such riddles. They affirm the existence of God, as the supreme cause of everything. An atheist is not made to suffer for his disbelief, but is disillusioned by the facts as seen from the other world and by the experiences of higher beings. The vastness of the region precludes any possibility of giving a detailed account thereof and one has to rest content with a bare outline of that unexplored land. Several volumes will have to be written to give sufficient information about the necessary points and one can read with advantage the volumes of Mr. Vale Owen who has written a lucid account after a study extending over a quarter of a century.

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THE SUPER-PHYSICAL WORLD

In these days of political agitation and the progress of Science, hardly any attention is being paid to the existence of the great unseen region that surrounds and interpenetrates us. In fact, it is commonly believed like the Charvakas of ancient times that there is no life after death and our goal in life should be to eat, drink and be merry. The scientists of today are busy studying the material side of the universe, harnessing nature

for the pleasures as well as the destruction of humanity, and trying to prove, if possible, that there is nothing beyond the material existence. The majority of them are blind or indifferent to the psychic evidence that goes to show that there is something that survives after the physical existence.

The horse-shoe incident in the life of Jesus Christ perhaps apocryphal aptly illustrates the indifference of the people to psychic phenomena and their deeper significance. While he was journeying through the desert of Galilee with his apostles discoursing along the way about the kingdom of heaven, he happened to see a horse-shoe and asked one of the apostles to pick it up. He being too absorbed with the subject of discourse, and thinking lightly of such a trifling thing paid no heed to the request of Jesus. But he realizing the importance of even the most insignificant thing walked back a few steps, pocketed it in his robe and marched on to the next village, where he sold it for a penny and purchased a few cherries. On resuming their journey in the hot sun of the desert, he, unknown, dropped some of the cherries. one by one and the apostle, who disdained to pick up the horse-shoe was only too glad to stoop several times to get a cherry to refresh himself with the mysteriously provided fruit.

Like many other parables this is capable of different interpretations and can very well apply to the indifference of the masses as well as the cultured people towards the psychic experiences. Very few persons will be found who had no experience of a mysterious nature. It may be a dream, materialization, hearing of a voice or some other manifestation of supernormal kind which was puzzling to him and which one cannot account for. They may very well be compared with logs of wood that came floating from America and convinced Columbus about the existence of the unknown land beyond the vast ocean. If the phenomena are properly

correlated and viewed in their right perspective they will bring home to any reasonable man the existence of another world beyond the material one.

The majority of people are too preoccupied with their own religions or rationalised views of life to attach any importance to these phenomena, and they are wont to ignore or exclude them from their conception of the cosmos. These facts are regarded generally as trivial, repulsive and not in harmony with their religious or scientific views. There are many who are satisfied about the genuineness of the phenomena, but ignore them on account of the difficulty of coordinating them with other scientific facts. To them the task seems well nigh impossible particularly because the phenomena cannot be controlled or commanded. A comprehensive view of the cosmos however will enable us to think that the phenomena commonly miscalled supernatural are perfectly attributable to causes which may be adjusted in the universal scheme of things, and results of great value may thereby be obtained.

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SPIRITUALISM AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH.

Although the essential function of Spiritualism is to prove the continuity of life after death, and the possibility of communication with those who are gone over, it can be of much help to us in our mundane matters also, provided we practise it along right lines. Healing broken-hearts, consulting spirit-friends about the remedies for certain diseases, eliciting information which was known exclusively to the spirit, and curing maladies by the help of spirits are some of the uses for which spiritualism is being utilised in different places. A mysterious murder at Bournemouth in England was traced by spiritualistic methods. But it can be serviceable in certain other matters

also, so that those who are interested in that pursuit may try to use it with advantage.

There are many points in history which have baffled the attempts of researchers. Modern histories are based on insufficient information and distorted facts. They will have to be re-written if more light is thrown upon several obscure points. In vain are we seeking for a few letters here and there of historical personages. How illuminating would it be, if we get into direct touch with those very persons, so that the least shadow of doubt may be removed about a particular contested point. This is not a mere pious hope or a freak of imagination. Such information can be and has been obtained several times in this way. The world may or may not believe in such testimony, but those who have taken the trouble of investigating the matter know it to be a fact as clear as any other in the recognised branches of human knowledge.

These investigations, though very interesting and fraught with immense possibilities, have got certain limitations which must be always borne in mind. Communication though possible is not easy. It is not like ringing up the person on the 'telephone'. Patient research and sincere efforts are needed to get genuine communications. Sometimes the spirits are unwilling to give the desired information as they do not attach much importance to that point from their new state of existence.

Besides, if the spirit is no longer in the next world, it is generally not possible to get into touch with him, and information regarding him is usually supplied by other guiding spirits. No efforts would then be of any avail, and the research student will have to depend upon other avenues of finding out the particular historical fact,

Spirits being persons like us, sometimes take delight as it were in impersonating other individuals. This is particularly experienced in trying to communicate with great persons. If the services of a clairvoyant be available on the occasion, the fraud from the other side can easily be detected. In the absence of such means, all possible circumstantial evidence should be sought to ascertain the genuineness of the messages. In my research extending over several years, I have found fewer lying spirits than living human beings. Barring such limitations, the subject is very fascinating and would open a new field for the students of history.

In this connection it will be worthwhile to point out that the life of Joan of Arc was written mediumistically by a young girl of fourteen, under the control of the heroine herself, containing numerous references to ancient manuscripts not known to historians, many of which have since been discovered in old libraries, through the indications furnished by the volume itself.

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SPIRITUALISM AND RE-BIRTH.

It is commonly thought that the doctrine of reincarnation is inconsistent with the principles of spiritualism. Many people believe in transmigration and mistakenly think that the possibility of spirit communication is inconsistent with the idea of rebirth. They rely on certain texts in the Bhagawatgita and assert that Lord Shree Krishna has propounded the principle of immediate rebirth. As a matter of fact the interpretation of the verses bearing on this point is quite erroneous and faulty. The great Teacher never seems to have held the view which has been attributed to him. In one of his verses he says for example "Obtaining a new body is like the change from boyhood to manhood and from manhood to old age." The idea under-

lying this verse is very important, as it clearly shows that there is a continuity of life after death. He compares this change to the natural progress in a man's physical body which is gradual and not sudden, as some are led to think. An individual passing from boyhood to adult age thinks himself to be the same person, has almost the same ideas, and retains the same tendencies and love in spite of the outward physical changes in his body. Similarly the transition into etheric body is a process quite analogous to this change. Those who have got doubts on this point will do well to ponder over this verse and try to find out its deeper significance.

Besides the above verse there are several others in which the existence of Paraloka (Next world) and an individual's stay in it has been admitted. While explaining the fact of a Yoga-Bhrashta man (Fallen from the path of Yoga) Lord Shree Krishna says, that he having attained the glorious regions and having stayed there for several years is born again in a pure and noble family. Here also the same idea is propounded. Another verse bearing on this point is often quoted but is never rightly understood. The verse runs as follows: "Just as a man casts off old clothes and takes up new ones, similarly the soul leaves old bodies and enters new ones." It is inferred from this statement that Shree Krishna inculcated the doctrine of immediate transmigration. But when we read this verse along with others in the book, we find that there is not the least evidence in support of this view. The only thing that is meant from the above verse is that the casting off of an old body can be compared with the removal of worn-out clothes, and taking up new ones. The Hindu philosophy admits the existence of several etheric bodies out of which the second has been definitely proved by spiritualism. It would therefore not be proper to hold the view that the possibility of spirit communication gives a go-bye to the theory of re-birth.

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SALVATION AND SPIRIT COMMUNICATION

Next to the theory of reincarnation the principle of salvation is a stumbling block with many persons in the proper understanding of the possibility of communication with the spirit-world. Several times it is asked as to how the spirits who are supposed to have attained salvation can communicate in our seances or elsewhere. It must be stated here at the outset that those who put these questions have generally very vague ideas regarding the exact interpretation of the term "Salvation." Usually it connotes merging into the infinite ocean of life, or becoming free from the cycle of birth and death. If we accept the latter interpretation, which to our mind seems more reasonable, there is nothing inherently inconsistent with the possibility of getting into touch with such evolved spirits. They are there free, not being compelled to return to earth in another incarnation. The former interpretation, however, does not find support in the spiritualistic experiences, because we invariably find that the identity of the communicating individual, far from being lost is conclusively demonstrated in all possible ways. It may be that after an infinitely long period the individual soul is merged into the cosmic soul of which it is a part as the Vedantists propound; but it seems fairly well proved that for ages together the individual does retain the same ideas and tendencies which he had during his earthly life.

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IDENTITY OF SPIRITS.

The identity of a communicating spirit, though no doubt an important matter, must be determined by all circumstantial evidence. No hard and fast rule can be laid down on this point and each case must be decided on its merits. Besides, the degree of conclusive evidence will vary with different sitters. Some may be satisfied by a few personal touching messages.

while others will insist upon more convincing matter. The failure to get a reply to some particular question need not induce any one to jump to an adverse conclusion. We have to consider the messages as a whole and the surrounding circumstances, under which they are received. Our discarnate friends cannot for various reasons stand the test of the severe cross examination, as we would have it in a court of law. We would do infinitely better if asked to prove our identity during our earthly life, but the glimpses that we get occasionally are sure to make a reasonable man ponder over them, and admit the spirit-hypothesis as a working theory.

In our observations on one occasion my father while communicating with me was requested to mention something to prove his identity. Whereupon he said "Where are the sons of Sakharam"? This was a very striking question, because I had not the least thought about that gentleman, and Mrs. Rishi of course knew nothing about him. In fact I was led to think of some other gentleman when he mentioned this name. But he set me right by mentioning other facts. This was certainly a striking piece of evidence, but if I were to insist upon his writing down some Mantras from V edas because he was a thorough Vaidic Brahmin, I doubt whether he would do so. Judging from my own experience I can say that although I have studied so many subjects for my examinations, I remember very few of their details. They have receded far below in my brain cells and I cannot now recall them. We must bear these and several other principles in mind when we question the spirits about their identity. The best method of acquiring the knowledge of spiritualism is to bring reasoning to bear on the subject and afterwards to confirm it by experiments.

Besides the contents of the message, the existence of a spirit is sometimes strikingly demonstrated by trivial points, which incontrovertibly prove that some extraneous entity must have

produced the phenomena. A familiar spirit who used to come to communicate once a week advised her relatives to bring her child one day in the seance room. After receiving some communications from her, we were going to close the sitting by the usual tilts of the Table. But it would not move, which was rather uncommon. When asked whether she had anything further to say, the table at once gave two tilts indicating affirmation. It was then pointed out on the Ouija Board that her relations should not forget to bring the child as suggested. Such incidents though trivial go a great way in proving the identity of the spirit.

The opponents of spiritulism often try to attribute spirit-messages to the sub-conscious self of the sitters forming the circle. Experience alone can show whether the theory of sub-conscious self is right or wrong and it has shown it to be wrong for it proves by the most positive facts that the thoughts expressed may not only be alien to that of the persons present, but in opposition to it contradicting their preconceived ideas, and disappointing their expectations.

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OUR DUTY TOWARDS THE DEAD

The spread of spiritualism is greatly hampered by the ignorance of the people and the apathy of leaders in the country. A student of this knowledge has to unlearn many things and give up several mistaken notions for its right comprehension. Very few persons are unfortunately, so liberal-minded, and the result is that most of our countrymen fail to understand the subject and its importance. They find it far more convenient to cling to their mistaken ideas than to open their eyes and analyse the phenomena which they see before them. Some of them have not even the leisure to spare a few hours to communicate with their beloved dead. The ridicule and fear of public opinion which are generally associated with this subject are some of the greatest handicaps in the growth of this movement.

It seems the spirits are far more eager and anxious to communicate with their friends on earth than the latter. Their eagerness to communicate sometimes prevents the success of a seance, as every one of them desires to convey his message to his friends on earth. Incorrect messages are bound to come if many persons try to speak through a telephone at one and the same time. Similarly the unruly ardour of spirits does at times mar the success of a seance.

Editors and contributors to newspapers write lengthy articles about the supposed views of a departed leader. These imaginary word-pictures are no doubt a pleasant reading, but they do not represent his real ideas. The readers peruse such contributions with zest and nobody cares for truth. The departed leader in whose memory these contributions are published might surely be resenting this misuse of his name. In spite of the fact that there is a way by which we can know their correct ideas, our ignorance, apathy and misconceptions prevent us from going along the right path.

Some of our political leaders fail in their duty in this matter of vital importance. After having attended the seances and being well-impressed by the results they do not use their influence in any way to facilitate the spread of this knowledge. The spirits deplore this apathy of their friends and have expressly said so in some of our seances. They yearn to communicate with us but are unable to do so without our co-operation.

The experiences in our seances showed their intense interest in political affairs also. They know of things far more than we do and can communicate with us from time to time. It is our sacred duty to turn our attention to this neglected branch of human knowledge, if not for any altruistic purpose at least for our earthly interests and for the very love which we profess to have for our departed friends and relatives.

This is not a subject of mere academical interest as some may be led to think. Western researchers have made wonderful progress even in this matter which was once supposed to be our pre-eminent heritage, and they confidently claim to master it just as they are doing in other scientific subjects. Let us not be lethargic, indifferent, or put forth sham excuses. As the spirits say the day seems not far distant when our efforts will be crowned with success.

One of the greatest misconceptions about spirit communication is that we are disturbing the spirits by trying to get into touch with them. We have repeatedly pointed out that this is an erroneous belief and there is not the least evidence in spiritualist literature to justify the view.

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ON THE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

The experiences recorded in this volume have been obtained on the Ouija Board through the mediumship of Mrs. Rishi. It consists of a polished board with letters of the alphabet and numerals up to ten printed thereon and a pointer. The pointer is made of thin wood, shaped somewhat like a heart and it has three short legs attached thereto. Its size enables one to grasp it with the hand or to allow the fingers of two persons to rest lightly upon the top. When the proper conditions have been established, the hand or the fingers of two persons using it unconsciously cause the pointer to glide over the board which may rest upon a low table or upon a lap of one of the users. Then the pointer moves without the deliberate intention of the sitters over the letters which the unseen influence chooses. These are recorded and they constitute the communication. Some mediums obtain communications blindfolded, so that another person has to read the letters. We work normally and note down the letters. When thus at work, we speak to our spirit-friends aloud in a conversational manner as if they are visibly present.

This seems a very simple and easy way of obtaining communications, but it is very undesirable to attempt to get into touch with the spirit-world in this or any other manner without some preparatory knowledge about the subject. So fully convinced are we about about it, that we deem it a waste of time to help those who do not take the trouble of getting some idea about the principles and methods of spirit-communication.

Intercourse with the other world, though possible is not easy, and we have to make allowance for various factors which impede the free flow of messages. The success of a seance usually depends upon the co-operation of the sitters, medium and the invisible entities helping from the other side. The medium has been defined as a person who acts as an intermediary between this world and the next. The individual gifted with the necessary psychic power acts as the joining link between the two states of existence. His or her importance can never be exaggerated. The person can very well be compared to a telescope in spiritualistic observations. The power does not depend upon age, sex or even a man's temperament, and there is no outward sign, so far known by which its existence can in any way be perceived. The only way to test it is to admit the person in a seance and see how far he or she is helpful in obtaining communications. The power is latent in several persons and can be developed by proper guidance.

Although the identity of a spirit needs to be established in accordance with the laws of spiritualism the experimenters will do well to bear in mind that there is a distinct improvement in writing if they proceed on the assumption that the desired spirit has come, but cannot properly communicate owing to adverse conditions. On the other hand the results are discouraging if the experimenter all along assumes an attitude of scepticism and lack of regard for the communicating entity.

One has to work patiently for a period which varies with different individuals according to the latent psychic power.

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DO SPIRITS WILLINGLY RETURN ?

It seems that the attempts for spirit-communication are made in some places with a fair amount of success, but the enthusiasts who try these experiments are very often unaware of their salient features. In their eagerness to converse with discarnate intelligences they do not care to know whether the necessary fluidic harmony exists between them and the evoked spirits. The main link in the chain of attraction by which the spirit may be drawn to the medium is the mutual affinity and the intense desire to get reunited. This leads us to the consideration of an important point in spirit evocation by a medium. In other words the question can be thus stated "Is evocation agreeable or disagreeable to the spirits evoked ?

The reply to the above question involves many points which are of supreme importance to a student of this knowledge. Categorically we should say that the departed entities are eager to communicate with the living. But the indifference and ignorance of the latter are in very many cases an insurmountable obstacle. Generally speaking it may be said that the willingness of a spirit to respond to an invocation depends upon the character and motive of the evocation. If it be in view of noble and useful ends and when the evokers and surroundings are sympathetic, the discarnate entities rarely fail to respond. For some spirits, communication is a very great pleasure. Many of them are pained by the abandonment in which they are left by men. But all this depends upon individual character for though comparatively rare, there are spirits who do not like to be disturbed. A spirit has no motive for responding to the call of an evoker who is unknown to him or with whom he is not

in sympathy, especially when the call is prompted by mere curiosity. Should he come, it will be only for a short time and he most probably will not come, at all unless he sees that some useful end will be served by his coming.

There are persons who only evoke their spirit friends in order to ask them about the common things of their earthly life, such as whether they should buy or sell a house, whether they will make a profit by some commercial speculation or whether such and such a transaction will turn out advantageously. Our friends and relations in the world beyond the grave only interest themselves in us in proportion to the affection that we feel for them; and if we only think of them only as magicians and seek their advice about worldly affairs they cannot feel any great sympathy for us and we should hardly be surprised at any corresponding deficiency of good-will on their part.

There is a tendency in some quarters to evoke only high spirits almost to the exclusion of our dear ones, while there are others who try to get into touch with bad spirits out of amusement or for earthly gain. Both of them seem ignorant of the fundamental principles of spirit-communication as it is usually very difficult to get a high spirit frequently to converse with a particular person unless the former is pleased to do so for some altruistic purpose. There can be no compulsion of any sort in the manifestation of such entities, and they stand on an entirely different footing as compared with our dear ones. The unabated love can and does induce the latter to respond to our invocation, while there is not such a bond to draw the latter to us. They come out of their sweet will just to favour and guide us in the path of virtue but on account of the very nature of things one cannot insist upon their coming and their visits are very few and far between. It is for this reason that we should not be too persistent in our demands for high

spirits and try to to converse more with our kith and kin. Bad spirits only come voluntarily in the hope of dominating and deceiving ; they come very unwillingly when compelled to do so and in order to avow their faults. Under such circumstances they would gladly keep away ; but are sometimes constrained to come by superior spirits as a chastisement and means of advancement for themselves and a lesson for human beings who evoke them. Evocation for puerile purpose can only be wearisome to superior spirits who either do not come or soon retire.

It should be always remembered that spirits do not like to serve as an amusement for the curious. Many have no better purpose in evoking a spirit than to see what he will say, or ask him particulars in relation to his earthly life which it is not their business to pry into and which he has no motive to confide to you. It should never be supposed that he likes to be put into the witness-box and cross-questioned at our pleasure. What a person would not have consented to do while on earth, he will most likely decline to do as a spirit.

Experience shows that evocation is always agreeable to spirits when made for serious and useful ends. The good come with pleasure to instruct us, those who suffer find relief in our sympathy ; and those whom we have known are gratified by our recollection of them. Frivolous spirits delight in being evoked by the frivolous, because it gives them an opportunity of amusing themselves at their expense, but they feel very uncomfortable with more serious persons.

In this connection it would be worth while to point out a common error of attempting to obtain messages through mediums who have developed their writing faculty. They are useful in reinforcing the psychic power of a sitter, but cannot do the entire work for him. It would therefore be a mistake to

suppose that provided you have a good writing medium at your service, you can get communications of every sort.

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THE PROGRESS OF SPIRITUALISM.

The activities for the spread of knowledge regarding Life after Death are going on for several years and the people are gradually though slowly feeling interest in the subject. There is some awakening in the minds of the people, but usually it is ephemeral and lasts only as long as they yearn to have talks with their dear ones. In fact as is but natural and almost universal it begins with some bereavment and lasts only till the memory and love for the departed is strong and the pain of separation is fresh. There are very few who take sustained interest in the subject, and realise its deep implications. The progress of the movement essentially depends upon the co-operation of such keen seekers of knowledge who help the cause in various ways.

The progress of the movement entirely depends upon the co-operation of well-developed mediums. In our country we find many persons experimenting through automatic writing and other methods. They claim to have got excellent communications in their home-circles, but they hesitate to help others in obtaining messages from their dear ones. Some spend their time in conversing with alleged high spirits and do not care to compare notes with others. Some have suffered by overdoing and have thereby harmed the cause. There are a few who can get satisfactory communications from their spirit friends, but they cannot for want of sufficient psychic power be helpful to others in these experiments. Most of the readers are aware of Mrs. Rishi's mediumship which enables the sitters to get messages from those whom they love. The country needs mediums who can demonstrate the truth of spirit-return. In

fact the mediumistic faculty is latent in very many persons and can be developed under proper guidance. It has been well said that mediums are like telescopes to Astronomers. The movement in foreign countries is progressing on account of the mediums which they possess. Let us hope for the day when India will have such intermediaries to facilitate the spread of this knowledge. There might be many persons who are endowed with this faculty but they need proper development.

Most persons in our country are unaware of the physical phenomena or mediumship which can be witnessed by the co-operation of some well-known mediums in Europe and America. It is a news to them that we can hear the voice of spirits, see them with our eyes, and touch them with our fingers and that it is possible to obtain spirit photographs also. We could get personal experience of the phenomena in our visits to Europe and can testify to their genuineness. Only those in our country who have not cared to observe them doubt or deny their veracity. It is highly desirable to educate the people about such phenomena so that they may easily understand this grand truth.

So far as India is concerned we have the Indian Spiritualist Society which is trying to make this knowledge popular and wide-spread. Mr. J. N. Roy of Bhatpara has also formed a local Society and is doing good work there.

A healing centre has been started at Coimbatore by Mr. K. S. Doraswamy as a result of our visit to the city in 1938. In his letter he says, "War or no war, we are all happy with our Guide whose advice in every matter is coming true in every respect. I shall give a small example. Last year I had a Rupee with me before I started the second anniversary publication number and there was not any paper available even at Madras as the merchants had hoarded the same. I asked Ram

Ram if I may stop the celebrations and the reply was "carry on all will be well". Everything went off well and I got just what I wanted not a pie more. So I leave everything to Ram Ram and surrender to his orders. I think of the day when you initiated me in this art and this has put me in touch with great intelligences. It has given me happiness in this way so that I do not worry about anything and I have cheerful outlook on life. You will be amazed to hear from me that even impossible things come round happily."

Pandit Kedar Nath Sharma has been issuing a monthly journal in Hindi which is exclusively devoted to 'Life after death.' The name of the magazine is 'Parloka' and is being published at Bhivani. It will thus be perceived that the knowledge is gradually though very slowly permeating the masses. The strength of the movement is to be judged not by the number of public associations but by home-circles, which are being held all over the country. Very often I meet persons who have obtained some communications in their experiments. For various reasons they do not want to come in lime-light, but all the same they are quite convinced of the truth of spirit-return.

The movement has an aspect in the spirit-world also. Sir A. Cannon Doyle is reported to have said that we are not judging the invisible, but the invisible is judging us. The truth is repeatedly experienced in the co-operation of the guides from the Spirit-World. They are rendering yeoman services to this cause and help the mediums in propagating the truth of spirit-return. Besides, it is usually experienced that the departed persons are eager to communicate with their near and dear ones but fail to do so for want of co-operation from the living. They do not cease to take interest in earthly affairs and are prepared to help others as far as it lies in their power. Their progress is in no way retarded by occasional talks with them.

In fact several spirit-friends have expressed that they feel encouraged by the touch with those whom they love. The knowledge regarding life after death is the antidote to materialism which is the bane of modern civilisation. That alone will bring home to mankind that man is a spirit and has a body. The departed persons seem to be so near us that the veil separating them can be easily lifted. Out of the very love and regard for them it is our sacred duty to co-operate with them, in these efforts. The progress of this knowledge will facilitate their way and spiritualise humanity.

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PSYCHIC RESEARCH AND INDIAN SCIENTISTS

It is a deplorable fact that the scientists in India are indifferent to the phenomena of psychism and the observations made through mediums. Far from encouraging such pursuits some of them even ridicule their confreres of international reputation, by dubbing them as mere newspaper scientists. The spirit of investigation on this subject which is found in some of the continental scientists is sadly lacking in our country, and hence we have to look to foreign savants for information and guidance. Obviously there are very many difficulties in the way but they can be overcome if they seriously apply to its study.

I had the honour of meeting some of the luminaries in our country, but they seemed utterly ignorant of this vital knowledge. Their apathy even when the matter was laid before them was very painful. They would approach the subject in a slipshod manner while being aware of the necessity of persistent efforts in their own domain. No knowledge can be acquired without time and study, and psychic research, which involves the profoundest questions of vital importance to humanity has a prior right upon the more intelligent class in the country. A

seance or two attended after a long laborious day of hard work in other affairs, more in a spirit of amusement rather than as a serious study will not enable a man to form a correct opinion about the subject. The study requires the devotion of trained intellects and submission to the domination of a single purpose. But this can only be done when the search is raised to the dignity of a profession.

Progress in physical sciences has been entirely due to the improvement in the mechanical instruments for studying nature. Speculation for a thousand years would not have disclosed the constitution of matter if the present day appliances and laboratory methods had not been used by the modern physicists and chemists. The same law with certain modifications holds good in psychics and it can be emphatically asserted that a psychical laboratory is one of the prime needs of our national interest and importance as *inter alia* to it could be sent all embryonic mediums to have their phenomena tested by experts. Some years ago, Sir Oliver Lodge contributed a paper to the Psychic Research Society pointing out the necessity of such a laboratory. It is premature to point out the list of phenomena which can be studied in such an institute. But it can be confidently asserted that it would yield within a few years valuable knowledge which would more than compensate for the outlay involved and prove of inestimable value to the whole of humanity.

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CAN SPIRIT-VOICE BE HEARD ?

The existence of departed beings in another state of existence can be demonstrated by several ways such as Automatic and Ouija Board writing, Trance-speaking, Clairvoyance, Direct Voice and Materialisation. It is difficult to give preference to one among these various methods, although some are

tempted to regard the last as the best way of demonstrating spirit existence. To a superficial observer who is not conversant with the technique of the subject it may seem so; but those who have made a close study will readily understand the comparative value of each method. Occasionally we meet with persons who claim to have witnessed spirit-manifestation as a materialised figure which is commonly regarded as a ghost. But the phenomena of direct spirit voice which occur in the seances in Western countries are almost unknown in India.

HOW THEY ARE PRODUCED

It must be clearly borne in mind that the voice on such occasions does not proceed from the vocal cords of the medium who is present in the circle. The necessary psychic power is usually drawn from him or her as the case may be, and the departed entities make their voice audible to the sitters. The seances are held in complete darkness and trumpets are used for magnifying the voice. At the commencement of the experiment all the sitters sing hymns suitable to the occasion and continue to do so till the manifestation of a spirit which is usually indicated either by the lifting of a trumpet or by a cheerful greeting from the invisible guide of medium. Then follow whispers through the trumpet and gradually voices become audible to the sitters. The tone of the voice differs with every spirit and those who have used the trumpet find it easier to talk through it or by any other method. There is nothing particular in the trumpet which is made either of aluminium or some other light metal. It is simply a device for magnifying the voice. The spirits who attend such seances manage to lift it by the psychic power of the medium and the sitters. Although it is difficult to describe the exact process it can be said that the ectoplasmic emanations from the medium supply the necessary energy to move the physical thing. Some

instances of brain-disorders caused to those taking interest in the subject. The opponents of Spiritualism make much of such instances and the ignorant are scared away by this. The fault lies with those who dabble in the subject without having any preparatory knowledge of spirit-communication or its fundamental rules. Overdoing, obstinacy of the medium, his or her erratic temper, over-weening self-confidence, implicit and ungrounded faith in the power of the spirits are some of the causes which lead to some tragic happenings. The experience of such persons should be an eye-opener to those who think lightly about the subject, and imagine that they have only to put their fingers upon a table to make it move or to hold a pencil to make it write. It is very necessary that the experimenter should have some preparatory knowledge about the subject.

The above thoughts are particularly important on account of the tragic experiences of a South Indian young man who had come to visit us a few years ago. During his short stay he could talk with his departed brother through us and was quite satisfied with the messages. He seemed very enthusiastic about the spread of this knowledge as he realised its great significance. In one of his letters he intimated that he was able to succeed in the method. But a few days later we were shocked to receive a telegram from his friend that he had turned mad and our help was necessary. In the absence of any details we could do nothing and inquired further information about the tragedy. Next day we received a letter in which his friend expressed thus :—

“I am glad to inform you that Mr. P. possesses high mediumistic power and from the very first day he was successful in his attempts. He induced many of my friends to become members of your Society.

Subsequently Mr. P discussed with us at the seances and confined his talks with his dead brother, mostly concerning his marriage affairs. The messages received were marvellous and above the conceptions of mortals. These led him on to sit in seances both in the morning and evening for some days.

One night, while the dead brother was talking as usual, suddenly there was a new spirit which Mr. P. calls by the name "UNKNOWN." He intervened and continued his talks for 23 hours at a stretch without allowing sleep or food to Mr. P. During all these hours he was using the Board, Table and the Indicator.

Since day before yesterday he has discontinued his seances but still he is not free from the ideas of spirits, God and other world matters. He does not relish any food even. From this morning he is kept on milk by force. People in and around him are of opinion that there is mental disorder and medical treatment is necessary. This morning two wires were despatched to his uncle and to his parents to start immediately.

In his next letter he wrote "I am in receipt of your two letters of the same day. Mr. P.'s behaviour both mental and physical was beyond control. He had to be removed to hospital and strict watch was kept over him, day and night. During this time he attacked and beat the hospital staff including the Doctor and some of my assistants also. There was no limit to his ravings. I was also of the same opinion as you have written i. e. that sufficient rest and diversion from preoccupied thoughts would bring him round. But people would not credit my words. His parents were wired to and the next day they arrived. Now they have taken Mr. P. to their native place for treatment. If that local treatment were to be of no use, they would admit him into the Lunatic Asylum, as final recourse."

Another friend of the same place intimated the following about his condition.

"I cannot refrain from expressing deep sorrow at the present deplorable condition of Mr. P. His tender and innocent face, his lustrous eyes, his melodious voice in which he gave most interesting account of you and Mrs. Rishi's sympathetic treatment of him, compel me but to shed tears. His enthusiastic spirit could make it possible, to acquire more members for your Society, some of whom were likely to become life members also but his continual attendance at seances turned him mad. Although strictly forbidden, he attended hours together at the table. Whether he was speaking with his brother or some other spirit or his sub-conscious mind manifested in this form is not ascertained. One day his table tilted for nearly five hours in the night after finishing his work. For this he replied that he was regaining ectoplasm. But after three days he finished the work without tilting the table and for this his answer was that he acquired full mastery over the seances. Now he is mad and his mind is completely deranged. At times he recovers himself and says that some waves are coming and seem to enter his brain."

Our Spirit-Guide Oka's help was sought in the matter and he was requested to do the needful to bring relief to the unfortunate person. He intimated that he saw his departed brother, and would pray for his cure.

Regarding such mishaps the following replies were given by two high spirits.

"Mediumship will not produce madness where the germ of madness does not exist but where the germ exists (which is easily known) common sense would suffice to show the necessity of avoiding every kind of mental excitement. Those

who show the slightest symptoms of mental eccentricity or weakness should be dissuaded from its exercise by every possible means; for here is, in such persons an evident predisposition to insanity which any and every species of excitement would tend to develop. Spiritualist ideas are not more likely to produce cerebral excitement than any others but madness brought on by spirits alone would take its character from them, just as it would assume the character of religious mania if it has been brought on by the excitement attendant on an excess of devotional practices, and Spiritualism in such cases would naturally though unjustly be held responsible for that result. The best thing to be done, with every one who shows a tendency to fall under the influence of a fixed idea is to direct his attention to something altogether different from that idea, so as to give rest to the organs which are the seat of the excitement.

It might be possible to prevent individuals from seeking to hold communication with spirits, but it would not be possible to prevent spontaneous spirit-manifestations occurring to those very persons; for spirits can neither be suppressed, nor prevented from exercising their occult power. Those who should attempt such a repression would be like children who put their fingers into their eyes, and suppose that no one can see them. It would be folly to try to suppress what brings with it such great advantages, merely because unwise people make a bad use of it; the best way to prevent the inconveniences that may result from Spiritualism, among those who do not understand it, is, on the contrary to let it be universally known and understood."

It will be clear from the above that there is nothing inherently dangerous in spirit-communication, and no one need be scared away by such tragedies.

The gentleman reported to have become insane became quite alright after a few days and he himself wrote the following:-
"I was surprised to find in the recent Bulletin issued by you that I had become mad as a result of my experimenting on the Ouija Board. I am and have always been quite alright: The fact is that I have discovered that I am a first-class medium both on the board and also for automatic writing. In my first enthusiasm I began communicating with the spirits for one whole day at a stretch with the result that perhaps due to strain on my ectoplasm I grew weak and needed complete rest after which I am quite alright. I wish you publish it immediately so that people who are interested in Spiritualism may not be scared. Spiritualism has nothing on earth to do with insanity. If you don't mind, I shall send an article which also you may publish."

CHAPTER II

Co-workers' Contributions

OUR DIFFICULTIES IN INDIA

[Extracts from the paper submitted by G. C. Sajnani, B.A., LL.B., Advocate, to the International Congress at Glasgow 1937.]

The difficulty in India, just as it is abroad is the inability to grasp the real meaning and aim of spiritualism. At the best it is vaguely understood. To the masses it is taboo for one reason or another or for a whole dozen reasons together. To the few stimulated into interest, it is something as sacred as religion. But oh, how few!

There is an intermediate section who having grasped the possibility of contacting the "dead", whom they, in their fat-headedness regard as super beings, omniscient, god-like and rush in where angels fear to tread, with the Planchette and Ouija Board to tap their oracles for their chances on the Stock Exchange, Race Course and Lottery. In some instances, by some happy fluke or by pity of some sympathetic angel the predictions have proved correct. The result, the jubilant tapper of the awesome Unknown has bruited his fortune abroad to the ensnarement of some other silly ignorant. And so on goes the merry work of spreading a cult that hides its perilous head beneath the name of Spiritualism.

Another aspect of the picture shows the religious bigot, the sceptic, and the superstitious. The Hindu religion teaches almost the same as Spiritualism. It teaches survival after death, and the reality of spirit existence. It has a lofty

philosophy but like other religions it has lost the spirit for the letter, the soul for the ritual.

Hindus believe in reincarnation, and there have been striking cases of memory of a former incarnation to support the belief. So the Hindu is inclined to regard the spirit-realm as a Caravansarai, and not as the permanent abode of spirit people. Therefore, it is ridiculous to him, to be expected to believe that there are homes, gardens, rivers, mountains and all the natural beauties of the world but in a greater degree. "Why should migratory souls need homes" he perplexedly asks. They have to return to this earth to fulfil the Karma. So, probably he pictures them sitting about a sort of "Station of Waiting" until the next incarnation is due, like people who sit about on a Railway Station platform in India for several hours waiting for a train scheduled to arrive many hours hence.

Tell him that spirits have real bodies, which in their own sphere of being, are as tangible and substantial as ours are on earth and he smiles incredulously; for, what need have spirits for bodies when they must needs return to a body on earth!

India has a dearth, nay a veritable famine of mediums, so the difficulty of solving these mistaken notions cannot be handled adequately. If there were physical mediums capable of demonstrating materialisations that can be tested, felt and tried as they have been done abroad, the nebulous dream of airy beings of Hindu idea of spirit life would be dispelled.

And why should this India, the land of Yogi, the Faqueer and the mystic, not have any mediums? It does seem a strange situation.

But it is so, because India has its purdah system, her prejudices, her strict conservatism, and her fanatical conventionality. Only those who have laboured and broken their hearts to abolish these slavish ideas can understand the Indian abhorrence for publicity for its women.

Mediumship as all spiritualists know, preponderates in this sex. But which respectable Indian father or husband will gladly consent to his daughter or wife taking up public work, should she discover she has the God-given gift of mediumship?

There are others of the religious sort, who hold that it is harmful for us to communicate with the spirits of the departed. A highly-educated friend of mine has such a curious mentality that he avers that it is detrimental to his health, even to sit in a room where others are sitting with the object of obtaining light and guidance from the Other Side. Another says it is unlucky to use a Planchette, Table or Ouija Board. If a sitting of any of these types has taken place within her vicinity and some set-back manifests during the day or for the matter of that, some days after, she blames the malign influence of the seance! There are some who even go so far as to say that mediums should be childless.

Then the man looking for thrills or a new sensation, takes up what he thinks is Spiritualism, and under the name forms a cult of fortune-telling or under the guise of spiritual healing sets up a money-making business whether he has the gift of healing or not. This does not mean to say that there are no genuine healers in this country. But they are a sadly discredited band. Unless he has some diplomas and certificates from well-known Colleges and Universities no body can muster the faith to trust their welfare to the spiritual healer's keeping. "He is a commercial traveller or he is a grocer, or a baker or a candle-stick maker, so what does he know of healing?" the sceptical know-all asks.

Then there is a curious notion in the mind of the people that every speaker or writer on Spiritualism must necessarily be a medium. If I should express my ideas on this subject in print, it would be presumed that I knew the art of invoking the "dead" as well.

As anywhere else, where interest has been stimulated, people are more interested in the phenomenal aspect rather than the philosophical side of Spiritualism, and it is a painful fact which I and others know from experience, that, where no demonstration of public psychic phenomena can be given, the most stirring, the most convincing of arguments falls flat, to say nothing of a lecturer's added handicap in the form of quoters from the Scriptures, who appeal to the superstitious fears of the people who would otherwise at least listen if not believe.

INDIA'S NEEDS

India has only one public medium Mrs. Rishi. Think of it. A huge country of vast distances where a man can travel for a week by mail train before reaching the limits of India's strand. And only ONE Medium! That brave, that fine daughter of Ind, Mrs. Rishi travels with her equally admirable heroic husband, the sole organiser of this movement, as far as she can over this vast peninsula.

Practically no books or Spiritualistic papers are to be had out here except the Bombay Bulletin published by Mr. Rishi and the Journal named "Parloka" published in Hindi. The Editor of the latter works under tremendous difficulties, financial and otherwise, for, it has a paucity of subscribers, and part of the trouble is due to the language difficulty; there are so many different languages and dialects in India.

The Press here as in England has shown no sympathy towards this cause. With the exception of two or three papers, the press has just disregarded it.

Lacking this publicity to the facts and fundamentals of Spiritualism, this country has the queerest ideas regarding the subject. It is the cause of most of the misunderstanding.

Some people have oddest notions of mediums. Some imagine a medium to be a sort of a magician who, through some strange incantation and hocus-pocus, keeps in subjugation and control a menagerie of evil spirits who impersonate and give messages under assumed names etc.

But the predominant idea is that communication is the fraternising with evil-spirits Djinns, Bhoots which ultimately results in the communicator's insanity or destruction.

Even some otherwise well educated Anglo Indians are the victims of the most fantastic ideas of Spiritualism. They regard Spiritualists as beings who have penetrated the realm of darkness and acquired strange powers that can be turned to personal profit and mastery over the powers of other men. One Anglo Indian holding a responsible Government position asked Mrs. Victor if she could call up the spirits and ask them to compel a certain entity "to manifest and do my will."

RELIGION

The Hindu religion is quite clear regarding the spiritual nature of man. This world, again and again, has been emphasised as a mere inn, where we stay for a short time, and then go on to the other World, where our places and rank will be determined by the life we have led on earth. At least five out of seven principles of Spiritualism are clearly given as the rules of conduct in the Hindu Scriptures. There are various ceremonies for the "Dead" which rest upon the clear assumption that the "Dead" do live again in another world and that they are in touch with those left behind.

In spite of this, the Hindus are a bundle of contradictions. They do not know where they stand. Every individual has his own peculiar notions. What will satisfy one will not satisfy the other.

When a Hindu 'dies', we say, "he has gone to Parloka" (the other world) and we hanceforth prefix his name with "Parlokawasi" or "Swargawasi" (the resident of heaven.) And yet though running closely to Spiritualism in religious ideal, Hindus hold the oddest beliefs.

Under the difficulties enumerated above, it is patent what is needed. The masses need educating in the real meaning of life and death. They are attracted by phenomena alone, which for lack of properly trained mediums we cannot demonstrate.

It is due to our negligence and lethargy that India has lagged behind. There are still many Rishis, Sages, Faqueers who have marvellous soul-powers and who know all about the next world. But we hardly see them or hear anything about them as they live in solitary caves far away and never mix up with the world.

No other soil is so fertile as that of India, mystic India, once the zenith of Spiritual glory but now meriting as far as the bulk of people are concerned, the reproach of Shaw Desmond's words in "We do not die". "Spiritually starved, Europe no longer looks to the East for light, for light no longer comes from the East but from the West. The East is still, *though it will not always be* indifferent to the light which it once gave to a darkened world, that light of the World, which in its ultimate analysis may be called the light of 'Survival'.

This is what is true now, but as rightly pointed out by Shaw Desmond himself '*It will not always be.*' India is now under the eclipse, but it will soon be over, and it will shine forth in all its glory and once more give light and sunshine to the West.

India strongly advocates the doctrine of reincarnation. This important problem is still in the stage of heated contra-

versies in England. Even our friends from 'Beyond' are not unanimous in their verdict. It is for India now to solve this problem and produce sufficient evidence as she advocates it strongly.

The soil is here, but it needs the Tiller, and then the Sower. And then, please God, we shall unite in one great Brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God. White and Brown will lose their false values and prejudices and bias will find no place in class, colour, and creed. Only the spread of Spiritualism, its universality and its common ideal can do this.

Help India to once again blaze the trail of Spiritual glory, to realise harmony, real brotherhood and Spirituality:

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MEDIUMS IN INDIA

(By R. C. Pandit, Patna.)

As regards the want of suitable mediums in India, I find that it is not correct to say that there are few or no mediums in India. There are as many mediums in India as in any other country, and having different powers, even of materialisations.

There is however a vast difference in the outlook of the mediums, to real bonafide spiritualist science and enquiry, and of the public towards such mediums.

We have to divide the population of our country into several divisions. First of all come the educated and then the uneducated and lower strata of society. The second class is the more numerous and in this class whenever any person manifests any mediumistic power, he is treated by relations or villagers who are as ignorant as the medium, Ojha Bhutwalla or a Dain (Witch) and as their own mental and spiritual development is very low, the spirits who manifest themselves through them are of a rather lower order.

The deeply religious feeling and mentality of the population at once exalts the more educated medium to very high place and he or she is treated as a demigod if not God himself. The medium under such honour and worship soon forgets his real function of a medium and comes to think himself as a veritable God and not unoften practises deception on himself and the public.

I had heard of one or two women mediums who got into trance, and under proper care and training would have developed into proper mediums. But their trances, incoherent talks and a religious life made them into demi-gods. They were taken away by rich devotees, whose whole family worshipped them as God incarnate, which the mediums soon also came to believe themselves to be.

Then there are religious sects and communities who as a dogma do not believe in spirit communication or freedom of the spirits. Such manifestation of mediumistic powers is looked down upon and repressed as an evil.

Then come the ignorant credulous who form as big a majority as others. These also by their ignorance repress all manifestations.

Further, the majority of mediums are females and our social customs do not permit their association with any outsiders which prevents their powers being known and developed beyond the family circle.

This accounts for the apparent dearth of mediums.

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TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM.

by

(Dr. S. A. Bhisey, D. Sc., F. Sc., (Lond), New York.)

The desire to know something about the great mystery of life and to communicate with the loving soul in the spirit

world is a natural one. There is no race or religion that does not believe in the existence of the spirit world and there are thousands of honest investigators and mediums constantly endeavouring to pierce the thin veil between this and the next world.

Since the world war, Spiritualism, mediumship and such occult sciences have been attracting considerable attention, not only in this country but all over Europe. A few years ago, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle delivered lectures on these subjects before packed houses and created considerable interest in spiritualism. Some of the daily newspapers have been paying thousands of Dollars for palmistry and horoscope readings. These are signs of the time. While so much interest is being taken in occult science by people in all walks of life it is interesting to note that at present some well-known and highly respected mediums and many prominent people are being prosecuted by the police for practising and encouraging mediumship.

CRITICISM ABOUT SCIENTISTS

Many celebrated and internationally known scientists like Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Conan Doyle, Dr. A. Wallace and others carried out independent investigations for many years and unhesitatingly declared their staunch belief in the power of spirits to communicate through mediums. There is good deal of deception and fraud practised by fake mediums, but it is unreasonable to consider that such eminent scientists could be fooled at all times. In spite of such criticism the number of believers in spiritualism is rapidly increasing. Several magazines and critics while admitting the honesty of such scientists have severely criticised them. Because they seem to be unable to detect the frauds and tricks of fake mediums and are fooled thereby, they think their testimony is not absolu-

tely trustworthy- There is some amount of truth in such criticism, no doubt, and that is just why I am writing this article to tell how I was convinced of the truth of spiritualism in spite of my particular knowledge of the art and tricks of magicians and optical illusionists.

I have personally observed four cases of different types and I cannot honestly explain those as tricks with all my scientific and magician's knowledge. I cannot but honestly admit my firm conviction of the power of the departed to communicate with the living. However should any clever magician be able to give a convincing explanation of how these results could be accomplished or duplicated through trickery I would gladly change my views.

SCIENTISTS AND MAGICIANS.

Doctor and Madame Currie the discoverers of Radium firmly believed in the possibility of a radio-active substance and for several years went on patiently carrying out their laborious research work in shifting thousands of tons of ore to find a trace of such substance, and eventually they succeeded. There were also several sceptical persons who made some investigations and shifted a few tons of ore haphazardly and failing to find any trace of the desired substance abandoned the research work and announced the theory as bunkum. That is just what happened in finding out the evidence of spirit power. Reliable mediums are undoubtedly very scarce, but true and determined investigators eventually succeed in finding the evidence of spirit power and some day before long I believe expert magicians would be convinced of the controlling powers of the spirit and spirit-world.

A REQUEST.

I am particularly interested in knowing from the departed spirits as to their condition in the spirit-world. What happens when they leave this body and awake in the world

beyond? Do any of their spirit friends or relatives or angels come to greet or help them; or some devils or spirits are in readiness to torment them? Does their personal belief in any particular religion or denomination help them better than their own deeds in their earthly lives? What good the various kinds of funeral rites performed by the mourners do for them in their progress; are they free to re-incarnate; has the method of burial, cremation or devouring the bodies by vultures any particular effect on their progress in their spiritual development; do they return to this world with any predetermined destiny or merely become subjects of circumstances and such other information and advice that would help us mortals to understand the spirit-world better and facilitate our progress in this earthly life. I have been collecting data on these points for many years and I would greatly appreciate to hear from investigators that get in touch with real mediums, their experiences or findings. I would further request such investigators to get valuable information on such points whenever opportunity presents itself—to further prove the truth about spiritualism.

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MY CANDID OPINION REGARDING THE LIFE AFTER DEATH.

By

(A. S. Rangawamiengar, B. A., G. I. A. C.,)

My dear and beloved wife, divine Seetha, who was my partner in life till her demise on 18-3-35 was of the same nature as the divine Seetha Devi of Ramayana. Her separation from me had made me desparate. When such a soul departs it is our bounden duty to be in communication with him or her in the other world. Mr. V. D. Rishi had gone to Mysore in May 1934 and had delivered lectures. Then I had

no idea of Spiritualism. But when I lost my beloved wife, my anxiety to communicate with her and be in touch with her grew more and more intense. I was given a copy of the book Subhadra or Life after Death by a friend of mine. I studied it. Then I bought a copy from Mr. V. D. Rishi, for my own use. I have been studying it over again. It is a real and genuine source of consolation to me. When I read the book mentioned above I was forced to study many books on spiritualism. "Talks with the Dead" also helped me much. I approached the subject with no prejudice, or hatred or suspicion. I gained the full and complete confidence. It is a serious subject. A man with prejudice cannot appreciate it. In these days of Epicurianism, people must be made to take interest in this all important scientific knowledge. Much spade work requires to be done. Sincere co-operation of the masses is essential. My feelings regarding the subject are genuine and spontaneous. I got inspiration on reading several books. The more I study the clearer the idea becomes.

Identification and investigation of the spirit have led me to believe in the existence of the spiritual world. I advise every sufferer like myself to study Survival of Man, Raymond, Subhadra, etc. They give real and genuine consolation. There is nothing grotesque about it. Mr. V. D. Rishi strives very hard for that. He is not like others who want to make money out of this profession. He is very steady, honest and sincere. When I sent several questions to be asked to beloved wife I got correct answer which Mr. Rishi never knew. Even photos of spirit can be taken. I am a stranger to him and have not yet seen him in person. But our attachment has grown so much that I have considered him as my Guru and Spiritual father. This is no flattery. If such an important subject is not studied without prejudice nothing can be gained from any other sciences. "Knock and the

door will open" must be in the minds of all. To forget our beloved ones is a sin and crime, Death is certain and common to one and all. It is inevitable. Remembrance of our beloved in all its aspects is absolutely necessary. We are not born to eat and live. We eat to live. I think it to be genuine consolation to suffering humanity if we invoke the spirit with love and devotion. It is certain that the spirit is sure to help the sufferers on the physical plane. It is the prejudice, suspicion and obstinacy that are in the way of success. Mr. and Mrs. Rishi have been doing yeoman service, to all humanity. They have travelled in Europe and other places. The study of the science of spiritualism is being done with great interest in America and Europe and in other countries. There is no use in thrusting the subject on those who are prejudiced at the outset. There are mischief-mongers who are trying to spoil the fair name of the Spiritual world and its denizens. They deserve to be discarded. We must study Spiritualism for the sake of consolation and knowledge. It takes us one step nearer to God. A house cannot stand without proper foundation. Similarly without paying regard to our beloved who have left us behind to remember them, the whole human structure must tumble down. Flattery, hypocrisy and pretention will be of no avail. Have faith, be sincere and please the departed souls by direct communications with them. Noble souls deserve to be worshipped. Examples are to be set for others to follow. If the study of Spiritualism is done with care and interest much benefit and consolation are sure to be derived. My sincere prayer to Almighty God is to bless Mr. and Mrs. Rishi with success in their unselfish task, to give them long life and sound health to continue this arduous task for the sake of suffering humanity.

CHAPTER III

Words of Appreciation

LIGHT OF INDIA

The Psychic News of London dated June 6, 1942 contains a highly appreciative editorial under the heading "Light of India." It is the most popular Spiritualists weekly paper in England and the following extracts clearly show the editor's high appreciation of our activities.

"At a time when India is under the threat of invasion, it is fitting to pay tribute to the labours of two people who for many years have sought to spread the light of spiritual truth in that vast continent.

They are V. D. Rishi whom we have described as the Conan Doyle of India, a title he has well earned by his constant crusading and his wife who shares his arduous task.

In this continent the cradle of religious philosophy which is filled with superstition and belief in reincarnation, Mr. and Mrs. Rishi have toiled to bring the light of spiritual truth.

Without earthly influence, conscious of apparently insuperable difficulties, they have pursued an "impossible" task—the spreading of enlightenment among their fellow countrymen. It required an inflexible resolve to overcome all the obstacles but after years of patient pioneering they are beginning to see the fruits of their labours.

Rishi small in stature but large in spirit has used his pen and voice to spread our knowledge. He has addressed audiences, written articles and even broadcast our truths. He has to meet the arguments of learned religious men and the opposition of extreme Scepticism.

But he has had more than argument, for his wife, is a great psychic who can prove the truths of spiritualism.

In the background (or is it in the foreground ?) is Rishi's first wife who from the spirit world has provided the incentive for him to propagate his knowledge of survival.

His present wife has comforted thousands. When, after hearing Rishi's lecture they demand proof, he holds seances with his wife as the automatic writing medium. The mourners are consoled as they are reunited with their "dead."

There are hardly any mediums in India and so Mrs. Rishi has to bear the brunt of providing the evidence for survival.

Both of them were familiar figures in their picturesque garb, at all International Spiritualist gatherings. They envied the profusion of mediums this country possesses when they came to Glasgow a few years ago at the last international Spiritualist Congress. They pleaded for mediums to go to India, where masses awaited true spiritual enlightenment. The war has prevented a response to their plea.

And now invasion may darken India's gloom. But the flame that Mr. and Mrs. Rishi lit will never be extinguished."

DEVOTED COUPLE

The "Two Worlds" another leading Spiritualist Weekly of Manchester contains the following reference in its issue dated August 31, 1943.

"Despite the difficulties incidental to the war Mr. V. D. Rishi still continues to carry the flag of Spiritualism in various parts of this vast country. During this year he and his wife have travelled widely visiting Delhi, Agra, Gwalior. Etawah, and other places.

This busy couple have a firm faith in their spirit helpers, Public meetings are arranged and many prominent officials are

invited to take the chair. Spiritualism is explained and instructions are given which encourage listeners to start investigations in their own homes. Small circles are held for enquirers and Mr. Rishi seems to be very successful in receiving veridical messages, by automatic writing—the Ouija Board and occasionally by rappings. They have convinced many of the fact of spirit communication. Many of the recipients of evidential messages give testimony at the public meetings. India is a vast territory but what can be done by one devoted couple is done. They need and deserve assistance."

ROLE OF A SEER

Mr. Srivastava writes the following from Cawnpore :

"I am very much indebted to you for your considerate and merciful help in communicating on behalf of my stolen soul. This time the message is very consoling and consolidating in keeping the chaos out of my mental horizon.

"According to Hindu Scriptures, literally you are a 'Rishi' For the modern intelligence burdened men you assume the role of a Seer. Although vast knowledge is being shed on the subject of passing into the Great Beyond by an army of Theosophists, it is a plain truth that their total abhorrence in advising to communicate with the departed is to a very very large extent beyond scientific reasons. You have toiled to the utmost while the above named brothers are still peddling in the mid-way.

"Your book Spiritualism in India" is the only gospel for Hindu mourners whose religion is the oldest and the best in streaking rays on this vague subject."

BRIGHTER TORCH OF GITA

Mr. Hanmant Rao of Bangalore said the following in his appreciative introduction in one meeting: "In 1934 when,

Mr. and Mrs. Rishi came all the way from Bombay to Kolar to give me the first demonstration my doubts and my curiosity were at their height. But the seances with them were revelation. It simply overwhelmed me. My friends, however, were critical so they experimented. The result was the same. The critics became transformed into adherents. The Spiritualistic Phenomena into which Mr. Rishi has introduced me and my friends are to me so many reinforcements in aid and illustration of the teaching of Yoga and the Indian Yogic view of life which holds that "Siddhis" come as naturally as any other natural phenomena in the universe and that only the ignorant call them miracles. These demonstrations seem to me to make the torch of the Gita burn all the brighter for me."

ONLY SPIRITUALISTS

Mr. K. G. Subramanyam M. A. B. L., Secretary of the Comibatore Spiritualist Society wrote the following in his report regarding our visit to that place: "A glorious field of vision has been opened to us by Mr. and Mrs. Rishi the only spiritualists in India. We are highly indebted to them in such a measure that it is not possible to express it in suitable words."

SPIRIT CO-OPERATION

Mr. J. P. Karkaria of Bombay wrote to us the following while we were on tour: "I for one admire your pluck in fulfilling your mission in adverse circumstances and always at great sacrifice of your interests and those of Mrs. Rishi. You undoubtedly succeed in convincing influential people wherever you go, in the truth of this new science of Spiritualism. It is however not to detract from your merits to assert that you receive help in your not very encouraging task from the other side. How else can we account for the very flattering reference to yourself and Mrs. Rishi and the co-operation and patronage of great Indians wherever you go? We dare consider your success as our success, and feel glad."

A SCIENTIST'S ENCOURAGEMENT

Dr. S. A. Bhise of New York, the well-known Indian Scientist of International reputation wrote the following in one of his letters :—

“Allow me to congratulate you and Mrs. Rishi very sincerely about the work you were able to accomplish in foreign lands and the receptions and co-operation you received abroad. I am indeed very happy to know that the work of my heart the progress of spiritualism, has been progressing by leaps and bounds under your very able and devoted guidance with the co-operation of your good wife Mrs. Rishi.

“India, although she was the home of spiritualism and occult sciences, took very little interest in the modern times in spiritualism and allied subjects. Our educated countrymen thought it below their dignity to be associated with such subjects or even to make mention of it. Such attitude was undoubtedly due to our slave mentality. We must be led by the foreigner in such matters. You have started your pioneer mission at such a time, and you have had enough of uphill work to do and even stand unfair criticism and ridicule, but a pioneer must be prepared to stand all that. I know what the worth of pioneering means. You have now I believe broken the ice as it were by your going at the subject with your heart and soul and getting recognition from people who were not in sympathy with the subject and you have accomplished a great deal, so go my friends, Mrs. Rishi and yourself, on your onward march and give the world the benefit of your endeavours and lessen in their minds the imaginary and illusory fear of Death.”

CHAPTER IV

Talks With Subhadrabai

It is pretty well-known that my interest in Spiritualism and all that it stands for, commenced after the passing over of my wife Subhadrabai. Those who have read my book "**Subhadra or Life After Death**" will be able to know the whole story of my quest, and the evidence that I could gather regarding her continued existence and affection. She is my most frequent communicator and hardly fails to attend every morning. The following experiences will enable the readers to know the further proofs regarding her unabated love and interest in earthly affairs. Some may think that she is, as it were, being dragged behind by these continued talks and intermittent visits. But there is not the least evidence to support the view, as can be gathered from her statements as well as of those with whom I had the pleasure of conversing. She has progressed much in her sphere and has been of great help to those who are interested in this subject.

UNEXPECTED VISITS

An interesting feature of the experiment on one occasion was that when she was asked whether she had any message for me, she told me to hold the seance that day at 3 p. m. Exactly at that hour she was present and communicated with me through Table-tilting. The readers will be interested to know that I tried the experiment alone as Mrs. Rishi was not in Bombay. It took a pretty long time for me to get any indication, unaided as I was at that hour by the psychic power of Mrs. Rishi. Still the response did come and I felt convinced about the involuntary movements of the Table. Sometimes it used to lean towards me with great force indicating her

sentiments and persistent desire to communicate with me. I did not care to try even Automatic writing that time and quite enjoyed the conversation. Those who make light of this method will do well to note that what we are concerned with, is the contents of the message and not the manner of receiving it. Typtology as it is commonly called, is a means of communication like any other, and is no more unworthy of elevated spirits than writing or speaking. All spirits good or bad may employ this method as well as any other.

During the couple of days preceding the experiences recorded above my mind was greatly uneasy for various reasons and it seemed from all the communications received in that short period, that she was invisibly present there for a longer time than she is wont to do. The communicating were not long, but she managed to demonstrate her existence more often and evinced her unfailing love.

Owing to unavoidable circumstances, we had hardly any opportunity of communicating with Subhadrabai for one week. Saturday afternoon when we had a sitting she came with her usual promptness and said "I was waiting through out the week to talk with you. Of course I know your difficulties, and hence would not blame you for the delay. I used to come unfailingly every day just to see you." These experiences irrefutably show her continued existence and affection.

In an experiment at Poona which was specially held for getting into touch with the wife of a gentleman, Subhadrabai was the first to communicate although we never expected her at that time. She said "I have come just to inquire why you did not have a talk with me this morning." It was a fact that I did not try to converse with her that morning as I was in a hurry to proceed to Poona. But it seems that she earnestly desired that I should not fail to spare a few minutes for such a conversation.

Her persistent interest and continued affection were strikingly demonstrated in a seance one day. Usually she does not attend our evening seances and even if she be present allows other spirits to communicate with their friends in the circle. But on one occasion she was the first to indicate her presence and wrote a short message by my hand as Mrs. Rishi was out of Bombay. Another sitter helped me in Automatic writing and she wrote a brief communication by my hand asking me to sit again next morning. She said that she had accompanied me to Nasik as promised. This was the particular reason why she, as it were, forced herself in the seance.

During the tour in Mysore she used to communicate in the morning seances whenever we found it convenient to hold them. She showed her usual interest in our activities and accompanied us when we attempted the experiments for other persons. One morning she found it rather difficult to convey her thoughts freely which greatly puzzled us. A few hours after the experiment we had to sit for another gentleman when to our great surprise she intimated her presence and stated that she was there at that time because she could not express her ideas in the morning. Generally she does not communicate when we try for others but the morning experience must have induced her to say a few words that time. Other spirits could communicate after she had finished her message.

Usually Subhadrabai is not present at the evening seances and does not make her presence felt in any way. But one evening when a spirit was asked whether there was anybody else he said "There is a lady, but I do not know her. My friend (another spirit) knows her and he will tell." When the latter was asked about it, he said "She is Subhadrabai. She has come only to see but she won't write now. She will do so tomorrow morning."

STRIKING CORROBORATIONS.

After the attempts for indirect evocations she is sometimes asked the description of the features of the communicating spirit. The information thus obtained is conveyed to the persons concerned, who intimate the accuracy or otherwise of such descriptions. We have to make allowance for various factors in determining the accuracy of the statement. In a few seances like these she described the appearance of the entities that had come there, and her statements have been to a large extent confirmed by the relatives of the spirits. After giving a detailed description of the features of a lady on one occasion she said that she (Spirit) was fond of music, had a charming manner of speech and had a mark near the neck. The gentleman related to the spirit wrote that this was quite correct, but the mark near the neck was not there. When the discrepancy was referred to Subhadrabai she said that the spirit showed the mark near the root of her hair and hence she had stated like that. It is just possible that the gentleman might be unaware of the tiny spot near the hair. In another instance also the father of a deceased son admitted the description as quite accurate.

RECOGNISING OLD SPIRITS

In a seance she was asked as to how it was possible to recognise spirits who had passed over long ago. She stated that several times they had to acquaint themselves to their newly departed relatives, as the latter very frequently had no recollection regarding them. The information was confirmed by Oka, in his messages. He added that some spirits who had developed their powers could assume the same appearance which their relatives had in their memory.

APPEARANCE OF SPIRITS.

Regarding the appearance of a spirit she once stated that all classes of spirits the highest as well as the lowest could become visible but they had not always the permission or the wish to do so. The object of their manifestation depends upon their nature which may be good or bad.

NOTABLE INCIDENTS.

Usually Subhadra Bai gives her messages only in our seances, but during one week she could not fully express her ideas owing to Mrs. Rishi's absence from Bombay. Two of our members tried to get into touch with her on Monday when she was reported to have given the following brief but characteristic message. She said "Ask him not to be anxious." The message was received on Monday when as a matter of fact, I was greatly anxious on account of not having heard anything from Mrs. Rishi and had wired to her about it. The gentleman had of course not the least idea about these matters and the fact that she gave the above communication on that day shows her deep concern in earthly matters. She subsequently confirmed the message in her later communications.

She used to communicate in morning seances in Calcutta almost every day and attend the meetings which were arranged for propagating the cause. One morning a peculiar incident happened while she was conversing with us. In the course of her talks she spontaneously said, "Who is this lady here? She says that she will talk with her husband." This was very striking and quite unexpected. I could immediately imagine that the spirit to whom she referred must be the wife of a Parsi gentleman who was sitting in the adjoining hall reading some books on spiritualism. His spirit-wife had on previous occasions communicated with him and might have come with

the idea of having further talks with her beloved husband. The gentleman was glad to know the unexpected appearance of his wife and stated that simultaneously he also felt her presence in the hall. Subsequently the lady communicated on the Ouija-Board and had to be helped by the spirit-father of the gentleman for conveying her ideas.

PREMATURE DEATHS.

It is sometimes thought that many persons die at a premature age. This is a vexed question and different views are expressed about it by different individuals. When asked about this point, she stated that the time of death is fixed, and nothing could change it. Her views were confirmed by Oka in subsequent seances.

MEMORIAL

It was once pointed out by Subhadrabai that spirits attach very little importance to earthly formalities and decorations. Their real selves are not in their graves, or pictures, or any other things of memory, and hence they do not feel interested in whatever we do with regard to these things. We, owing to our ignorance make much of such earthly objects, and fail to realise that thereby we are neglecting the substance and running after the shadow. The photograph of Subhadrabai which is kept in our room was one day surrounded with flowers to express my feeling of endearment. When she was asked as to what she felt about it, she made the remarks mentioned above. It is very essential that the world should realise this grand truth, as thereby our outlook regarding the universe will be entirely changed.

Some of the readers might be knowing that Subhadra bai passed over at Miraj as a result of an unsuccessful operation. An idea occurred to me to have a stone-slab fixed on the room

in the Hospital in which she breathed her last. I wrote to the Superintendent of the Hospital about the matter, and he kindly consented to it. Subhadrabai when asked about it said that she did not feel much interested in it, as she was not now in the room.

FOREKNOWLEDGE

In connection with the proposed memorial at Miraj she expressed that the plan would not be successful. This was said at the time when the correspondence was going on with the Superintendent of the Hospital regarding the matter and I was very hopeful about it. But to my great surprise and regret, conditions were imposed at the last moment, which necessitated the abandonment of the idea.

DREAM EXPERIENCES

When asked about the appearance of spirits in dreams she stated as follows. "All have not the power to manifest themselves in dreams, notwithstanding your desire to see them. This is due to causes which are independent of their will. The appearance of living persons in dreams is almost always due to one's own imagination. All persons can see spirits during dreams. The soul or rather the etheric-body in that state can see without any intermediary; but when you are awake it is always influenced by the physical body. This is why the conditions are not quite the same when you are awake as in sleep. Besides, all cannot carry back the impressions after waking up. Take your own case for instance. The faculty of seeing spirits can like all other faculties be developed and the spirits can be touched when they become visible to you."

Another spirit said about meeting in dreams that she was afraid of coming over because she might commit mistakes in

the other world as a result of the distraction of her mind. Her husband was very anxious to have her vision in sleep, failing which she gave the above explanation for her absence.

Generally I do not remember my dreams in spite of my ardent desire to do so. It seems that I am lacking the necessary retentive power and my brain cannot carry back the impressions in my waking consciousness. But once I had a very clear recollection of having seen and conversed with Subhadrabai in sleep. On having consulted her next morning she stated in her message that she was present at the time and the memory was not a mere freak of imagination or due to some physical cause.

A gentleman closely related to us saw his father in a dream when he looked much fatigued and rather crippled. In a seance held subsequently Subhadrabai was asked whether she had seen the spirit, and if so, whether he had any bodily infirmity. She gave the information next day after making inquiries that the spirit in question had some pain in his legs and hence he looked crippled, but as a matter of fact he had no ailment of any sort. She added that he looked very old and she had some difficulty in recognising him, although she had seen him some time before.

One morning she asked the following question without my having any idea about it. She said "I met you last night at 2 a. m. What have you decided about going to the Himalayas? I had a long talk with you at that time regarding the matter." It is interesting to note that during the preceding two days I was discussing the matter and thought that it would be worthwhile to visit the Himalayas with a view to study the psychic phenomena there. Probably the same conversation might have taken place with her in my sleeping state of which, of course, I was not aware, until she herself narrated the experience to me

INDIFFERENCE TO WORLDLY THINGS.

A glass case was made to accomodate her bust and lighting arrangement was also made therein. When asked about it she expressed "I feel nothing regarding such matters. I was averse to put on even gold ornaments while living. How can I now feel interested in these things?" These expressions are very characteristic and rightly denote her mentality.

REMINDER

During a Diwali festival we missed her talk one morning whereupon she reminded us of our omission and asked "Why did you not remember me at the breakfast?"

"I used to have Diwali very often. Yesterday balls of sweetmeat were prepared. Why did you not reserve a dish for me?" This was rather unusual on her part as she scarcely expresses any desire like that. With a view to rectify the inadvertent error it was suggested that she should come that day so that we might do the needful. But she refused to do so and added that the balls of sweetmeat have become stale. With much persuasion she consented to attend next day, provided new balls were made. She stated the time and place where the dish was to be kept and promised to be there for an hour.

REPEATED VISITS.

One morning after a pretty long talk in the usual way she was again reported to be present at a sitting held at the house of another gentleman. We were told by the communicating spirit that along with others she was also present and accompanied us all the way. This was of course quite surprising to us as well as all the sitters, and we could not understand the reason of her presence there. When asked about it the communicating spirit stated that there was no particular reason for her coming and she would explain it next morning. We

could imagine the motive that might have prompted her to do so as she was rather uneasy for some domestic events and hence might have thought it desirable to accompany us thither.

She was again present in the evening seance that day and stated that she would explain next morning the reason of her repeated visits.

Early in the morning she gave a long explanation about her uneasiness on the preceding day. The messages were replete with all sorts of sentiments and abundant references were made by her to incidents in her life-time. For a long period she had not been so communicative, and I was constantly pressing her to give detailed messages about her feelings. She was possibly awaiting for some occasion to do so and fully opened her mind. In fact she seemed so moved by several circumstances that she would not like the idea of our making the attempt for indirect invocation that time. She thought that it would be a hindrance to her flow of messages and allowed us to do so with a great reluctance. The whole experiment was perhaps one of the best of her talks which we are having with her.

VIEWS ON SHRADDHA

Shraddha is a Hindu ceremony performed on the anniversary of the dead. When asked about this point, he said, "In my opinion the custom is proper. The chief point is that the present generation must retain the memory of their ancestors of preceding ones. Otherwise it would be difficult to remember even the great grand-father. That is the reason why it has been enjoined by the shastras (religious scriptures.) And it is right also. For in that way the ancestors come to the home on the occasion, and feel satisfied. They cannot eat the things directly, but derive the satisfaction. They only smell the things offered to them. The other point is that after over two dozen years they do not visit their homes very often. (How do they get the satisfaction then?) That is the reason why their names are to be pronounced. The name and soul are immortal. (Are they helped in any way in their progress?) That depends upon one's own efforts.

CHAPTER V

Experiences in Europe

LONDON CONGRESS 1928.

During our visit to England in connection with the international Spiritualist Congress we had very interesting experiences.

While the session of the Congress was going on, Mr. W. Hope the famous photographic medium paid a flying visit to London and we seized the opportunity of having a seance with him. I and five other delegates went to the Stead Bureau with Mr. Jean Myer, the Vice-President of the International Spiritualist Federation of Paris. Mr. Hope had a very busy time that day, as many foreign delegates were eager to have a sitting with him. Our group consisted of seven sitters and two plates were exposed on two batches of the group. The seance was held at about 4 p. m. and Mrs. Buxton also collaborated with Mr. Hope, as we were told that their joint power gave better results. The plates were supplied by Miss Stead and the packet was shown to us before using it. In the first group there were two "Extras" which have not been recognised; but in the second, in which I and Mrs. Rishi are the sitters, there is the extra of Subhadrabai.

The circumstances under which I got the extra are interesting and deserve a reference. On the morning of the seance, Subhadrabai had communicated that she would try to give her photograph and it seems that she succeeded in keeping her promise. A glance at the photograph shows the face of an Indian lady and a very close resemblance with her photograph taken while living. Neither Mr. Hope nor Mrs. Buxton were told anything about me or the passing over of my wife, and it is

certainly very remarkable that the photograph should have come under the above-mentioned circumstances. Mr. Jean Myer and all other sitters were equally anxious to have the photograph of a spirit known to them, but they were not lucky enough and I was considered very fortunate for having obtained the photograph.

The plates were developed before us in the room and the whole process was closely observed by us. I can say about the seance that not only was there no fraud but not even the possibility of fraud, and the genuineness of the photograph has been confirmed by Subhadrabai in her subsequent messages.

After the Congress I was free to study the spiritualist movement in England and also to do some propaganda amongst the Indians in London. I was afforded an opportunity of speaking in the Indian National Association and the lecture was largely attended by several distinguished ladies and gentlemen. Among others Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Mr. G. S. Dutt, I. C. S., were present on the occasion. I could see from the questions asked at the end of the lecture that it is extremely necessary to spread this knowledge not only in India but all over the world.

Another lecture was arranged by Mr. H. J. Osborne, the President of the Spiritual Fellowship in Kentish Town. He was also kind enough to nominate me as a member of the Fellowship and its inner Circle. The discourse was followed by experiments in clairvoyance and psychometry by Miss Smedley.

The spiritualist movement in England is carried on in a religious manner and all the meetings begin with a prayer to God and friends in the spirit-world. At such meeting public clairvoyants demonstrate the truth of spiritualism by describing the spirits that happen to be present near their relatives. We attended such a meeting in the Grottrian Hall, Aeolian Hall, and in the Wimbleton Spiritualist Church conducted by my friend

Mr. R. A. Bush. Some of the best mediums were present on the platform and could describe the spirits, and sometimes the names also come out quite correct. It is a puzzle to many as to how the mediums can do such feats which passes the comprehension of an ordinary man. The audience sometimes exceeds even five hundred ladies and gentlemen, and still the developed medium can and does give a fairly accurate information. Mrs. Estelle Roberts is one of the best public clairvoyants and I had the pleasure of attending her demonstrations both during and after the Congress. The prayer and music created a harmonious atmosphere which is absolutely necessary for good results. The religious side of this knowledge is not so keenly perceived in other countries and hence the foreign delegates were invited to attend the Sunday meetings held under the auspices of different spiritualist churches.

Besides Mr. Hope, there was another photographic medium Mrs. Deane who used to get spirit-photographs in the Stead Bureau. She is an old lady of over sixty years and seems to be gifted with much mediumistic power.

Mr. Bajaj, the proprietor of Shantiniketan, a hotel in London, wished to have a seance for spirit-photography which was accordingly arranged with her. We went there with Mr. Bajaj, Mr. Thakurprasad M. A. and Mrs. Rishi for the seance. Out of the plates exposed one only was found to have an extra face of a spirit which could be recognised by one of the sitters. All the same it brought home to Mr. Bajaj the genuineness of spirit-photography as he was closely watching the process from the beginning to the end, The method was the same as that of Mr. Hope with a slight difference in the period of exposure.

As Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was then shortly proceeding to South Africa in connection with the spiritualist propaganda, the Spiritualists in Great Britain gave him a hearty send-off

and a lunch on the eve of his departure. We had the pleasure of attending the function which was as important as the Congress. About 250 spiritualists were present on the occasion and Mr. E. W. Oaten, the president of the International Spiritualist Federation occupied the chair. Dr. Abraham Wallace and other well-known spiritualists in England spoke after the lunch. We could see on that occasion the keen interest taken by the British spiritualists in the propaganda of this knowledge.

Our object in visiting England was not only to attend the Congress but also to study the science and develop the psychic power of Mrs. Rishi. We had much success in that direction also as she could make much progress in trance-mediumship by the course of lessons in the British College of Psychic Science. It is an important centre of psychic matters and was ably conducted by Mrs. Barbara Mackenzie, who was then the Hon. Principal.

Within a month Mrs. Rishi's power could be so far developed that she used to go in trance and speak in English in that state when as a matter of fact she was quite ignorant of the language. The experiences obtained in the college were varied and cannot be summarised in this brief account. It is impossible to obtain rapid or sensational results in psychic development, and those who expect to have such experiences evince only an abysmal ignorance about this knowledge. Sensation-hunting must be discouraged and we must try to impress upon our countrymen the deeper significance of spiritualism.

Direct Voice mediums are very few and it is much difficult to get a chance to sit with them without waiting for a considerable period. Some mediums are booked months ahead and hence we had to rest content with the experiences that could be obtained in the Home-Circle of Mrs. Robertson. The-

seances which we attended for direct voice used to be held in pitch-darkness for about two hours and the voice of Mrs. Robertson's guide in the spirit-world used to be heard through the trumpet. It needs to be stated here for the information of those unacquainted with the *modus operandi* of the phenomena, that it is not the medium's voice but of the spirit who draws the power from the medium and the sitters. The trumpets are used during the seance only for magnifying the voice and serve no other purpose. In our seances there was a luminous spot on the trumpet so that its movements could be easily seen by the circle. It used to float in the room and sometimes cheerily patted us also. Throughout the seances the sitters had to pray intermittently and sing for harmonising the conditions which usually facilitate the voice. The musical box had often to be used for the same purpose. The Guide used to insist upon this whenever he found it difficult to produce the voice. He told me that Subhadrabai was also present, but she could not produce the voice. The spirit-friends have to get accustomed to the process and hence they are not able to produce any particular phenomena at the very first sitting.

The voice in the seances that we attended was rather low and indistinct as the circle was also trying to develop its powers. But I was told that with other advanced mediums like Mrs. May or Mrs. Osborne Leonard it is loud enough and quite audible. From all the observations that I could make in the seances, I can testify about the genuineness of the phenomena. No human hand ever touched the trumpet during the seances, nor was any contrivance made in the room for the purpose as some are led to think. The trumpet used to float at a distance of about four feet from the floor, and used to fall down with a great thud when the power weakened.

Our experience in England would be incomplete without the message which Mr. R. A. Bush, a wellknown spiritualist gave

to India. Much of my interest in this knowledge is due to him and when I had the pleasure of meeting him to give a message to our country which he greatly liked and admired.

He wrote "You ask me a message to India as an old Spiritualist. Nearly forty years ago, I began to fight my way into the heart of Spiritualism. I succeeded after carefully removing the decrepit or cumbersome superstructures of an old religion and rebuilding with new or restored material, a more useful and beautiful edifice upon the ancient foundation. Thus, as an advanced spiritualist following the spiritualism of that great everliving Asiatic Guru Jesus and his early disciples I speak to India and all peoples.

I belong to all religions and all countries. As a denizen of this round world, in humanity and in religion I recognise no fixed East nor rigid West. The East cannot say, 'Here I stand.' The West cannot say, 'Here I abide,' for all is East and all is West. He who has his eyes immovable, and blind to the beauty of the rising sun will lose the glories of its settings. He whose darkness has been enlightened by the rising sun must follow in its course, if he desires to remain in the light. In the heart of the Creator, the universal mother-father there is no darkness. From this light I call on His behalf to all His children in India thus: awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead. Cease from words and theories. Let your light so shine before the world that all the peoples thereof may see your good deeds and be refreshed thereby. All peoples are mine, therefore learn ye from one another, for it is my light and my being that dwelleth in every individual human soul without distinction and all are beloved. See that ye despise not any of my children. Beat the gongs in all the towns and village and let all India hear."

On our way back we halted for a few days in Paris and visited the International Spiritualist Federation. France has taken a great step in organising a world-centre for the pro-

paganda of spiritualism linking up various Societies and Associations working for the spread of this knowledge. Our Society has been affiliated to the Federation and has thus obtained an international status in the cause of spiritualism. It is confidently hoped that the Federation in Paris will be of great help to bring about the much-needed universal Brother-hood.

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THE HAGUE CONGRESS 1931

Our visit to Europe in connection with the International Spiritualist Congress at the Hague, which Mrs. Rishi and I attended as the delegates from India, was very useful in several ways. Besides taking part in the various proceedings of the Congress we could come in closer contact with the leading Spiritualists of the world and attend the seances of well-known mediums in England and other countries.

MATERIALIZATION EXPERIMENTS

During the Congress-week we had a busy time, but just after the session the General-Secretary, Mr. Van Walt invited us for a seance at his place. We went there at about 10 A. M. along with Mr. Berry, Mr. Keeling, Mr. Knott and two other ladies. The sitting was arranged by Mr. Kirkby, the inventor of Reflectograph and communigraph. He had come to Hague with the instruments and the medium Mrs. Singleton. In this seances we could witness the phenomena of materialisation. Some of the sitters touched the materialised hand which was visible to all the sitters. The face of the spirit covered with a sort of drapery could also be seen on three occasions. The seance was held by day before noon and the room was lit up with red light during the experiment. The medium was in trance in a cabinet with her hands and feet closely tied up. Three of the sitters could receive messages from their friends

and relatives in a very convincing way. The language and style were very characteristic and brought home the identity of each individual. At the end of the seance, the guide spoke in a fairly loud voice through the medium while she was in deep trance.

COMMUNIGRAPH

Another instrument which has been devised for the same purpose is the communigraph. It is not necessary to have a special medium to work it, and it has been claimed that any ordinary family-circle can get messages with it. It gives messages letter by letter on a white oval screen which is set in the surface of the table,

The Communigraph is similar in function to the Reflectograph but in working it no special medium is required to supply the guide with the psychic force for forming a visible rod or a materialised hand. In other words, the Communigraph is operated with invisible psychic force drawn from all the sitters in perfectly normal condition, and none of them need have any obvious mediumistic power.

We had no opportunity to observe the working of the instrument, but could see it during the Congress. It is less complicated than the Reflectograph and should prove greatly useful to all family circles.

SPIRIT CALL-BELL

Besides the above instruments we could see one, suggested by a Belgian spirit enabling the sitters to know the presence of their discarnate friends. It would be too long to describe the construction of the apparatus, but its principal aims are to announce to persons engrossed in other work that a spirit-friend wishes to communicate with them. With that object the entity rings the "Call-Bell" and if the person called possesses sufficient mediumistic power he can get message by means of the Ouija Board or automatic writing.

CLAIRVOYANCE

From The Hague we proceeded to London where we could meet several of our old friends and observe all sorts of psychic phenomena. The spiritualist movement in England is being carried on along religious lines and Services are held for offering prayers and getting into touch with the dead. On such occasions clairvoyant demonstrations are held so that some persons in the meeting can become aware of the presence of their departed friends. We used to attend these meetings at all possible times with a view to have personal experiences. At a meeting in the London Spiritualist Alliance when Mr. Vout Peters, the well-known medium, was demonstrating public clairvoyance, we were told by him that there was a lady standing by me, and the medium mentioned several facts which were true to a large extent. The experience was corroborated by Subhadrabai in her message next morning.

In our travels in Europe we used to converse with Subhadrabai as usual on all possible occasions and I had told her to attend the meetings like those mentioned above so that I may have the pleasure of feeling her presence. She seemed to have scrupulously kept her promise as I could find from the varied experiences in the seances. Other spirit-friends, in spite of our ardent desire to get into touch with them were not kind enough to respond to our call. The reasons for such an omission on their part though mysterious are indeed worth consideration.

Like clairvoyance, psychometric demonstrations are also held at several meetings in the Spiritualist Societies. The medium on such occasions holds in his or her hand the article belonging to any individual whereby he can feel the presence of a spirit known to the person and conveys the message to the sitter. On account of the psychic power the medium experiences the condition of the spirit at the time of his passing, and

even the physical pain is sometimes transferred for a few seconds to the medium handling the article. At one meeting Mrs. Rishi gave her ring to the medium for psychometry whereupon she was told that her father was there, but he had no communication to give at that time.

As in 1928 this time also we attended the seance for direct voice in Mrs. Robertson's home circle. In both of them we could hear the voice of different spirits, and could also feel the touch of their hands. The flowers which were in the seance-room were placed in our hands to our great surprise. On both the occasions Subhadrabai, as promised, tried her best to bring forth her voice through the trumpet; but she was hardly successful in her attempt. The guides did their best to help her in the matter, and when in spite of her persistent efforts she failed to do so, the trumpet used to fall down with a thud.

In the second seance, however, the control who occasionally speaks through Mrs. Rishi while she is in trance, was present and we could hear his voice quite distinctly. He gave us a short encouraging message and promised help and co-operation in our efforts in India.

Those who aspire to have such experience in India will do well to imitate the untiring zeal and persistent efforts of Mrs. Robertson's circle which had been trying week after week for about half a dozen years. In the first few years they could get no phenomena, but that did not disappoint them in any way. They were carrying on their efforts unostentatiously out of the love which they had for the subject and were sure to succeed in their endeavours.

SPIRIT-HEALING

The co-operation of spirit-friends is sometimes sought in healing diseases and alleviating human suffering. Mr. Jones was doing wonderful services in this direction by the help of

his guide, the medicine man who used to control him and heal patients by his magnetic power. The medium used to be in trance for hours together and had to be guided by his assistants who to a certain extent reinforced his power. The control was an African who had been doing this benevolent work through Mr. Jones. At first he was ignorant of English, but seemed to have picked up a fairly good knowledge of the language after about ten years. The large attendance at these meetings in the London Spiritualist Alliance was a clear evidence of his genuine powers and good work. We attended two meetings in the Alliance and were greatly impressed by what we saw.

The British College of Psychic Science is a wellknown centre in London where Psychic education is imparted. In our visit to London in 1928 Mrs. Rishi had undergone training in the college for the development of her trance-faculty. After picking up some knowledge and experience about the phenomena we used to hold experiments in India. The want of regular sitters was a handicap in her progress, and the faculty could not be developed in the absence of repeated sittings. In our visit to London this time we could arrange to have two sittings with Miss Francis under whose guidance she was trained on the last occasion. Owing to the suspension of practice for a long time the first sitting was almost abortive in as much as no voice could come forth through her, although she was in deep trance. It seemed that the control was trying his best to use her vocal organs, but failed to do so for a long time. We thought it worthwhile to conclude the sitting that day and give another trial. The failure to get any voice brought home to us the need of frequent trials so that the control as well as the medium might have the facility to speak. Our experiences in the second sitting were more than what we expected; and the control spoke fairly well through Mrs. Rishi for about three quarters of an hour on various points.

Referring to Subhadrabai the control said, "Your wife is very active. She often comes to me. She says that her love is just as it was before death. She has a necklace of beads in her hand. She is here standing by you. She always comes to you every morning." As regards the Spiritualist work in India he said, "It will progress gradually. The people are ignorant, but you need not mind them." He expressed his admiration for Miss Francis' work and gave her his best love. He asked her not to forget him in her seances. It is difficult to reproduce all that he said that morning, but I feel confident that much good work can be done by the cooperation of such highly evolved spirits.

TRANCE-ADDRESS OF MRS. MORRIS

The possibility of progress is almost unlimited under the guidance of advanced entities of the other world, as can be seen from the remarkable trance of Mrs. Morris delivered week after week in the Fortune Theatre. The place used to be quite packed in the evenings and several persons had to be disappointed for want of admission. We had the pleasure of attending one of the meetings and found it very interesting. The subject matter of the trance-address and the language as well the delivery were such as will do credit even to an accomplished speaker. The audience was spell-bound till the end of the meeting and pondered over the topics treated in her address. Some extremely advanced spirit seemed to be ventilating his thoughts through her for the benefit of humanity. It is very necessary to have such learned speeches so that the deeper significance of Spiritualism may be brought home to the world.

SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHY.

Photography supplies some of the undeniable proofs of spirit-return, and naturally they are sought whenever possible. Unfortunately the mediums who are gifted with the

necessary psychic power are very few and those who have it are largely in demand. Still we tried to explore all possible avenues of knowledge and could have a sitting with Mrs. Deane in the Stead Bureau. We went to the Bureau with Mrs. Robertson and had our photographs taken in the usual way. Two plates were exposed by Mrs. Deane, in the first of which I and Mrs. Rishi were the sitters, and in the second Mrs. Robertson was also sitting with us.

The plates were magnetised for a few minutes by holding them between our hands, and they were then exposed by the medium. Immediately after development which we watched in the dark room both the plates were found to contain extras besides the sitters. There are certain remarkable features in the photographs which can best be understood by closely looking at them.

A MESSAGE TO INDIA.

On the eve of our departure from England Mr. E. W. Oaten, the then President of the International Spiritualists' Federation gave the following message to our countrymen in India: "Mr. V. D. Rishi who represented India at the International Congress held at The Hague on September 4th to 11th 1931 is returning home and I have pleasure in committing to his care this letter of good will and encouragement to all the Spiritualists of the Great Indian Empire.

Your country saw the birth of spiritual idealism and religious practice. It laid the foundations, upon which have been built all the great religions of the world. Its philosophy has held the hearts of its teeming millions for untold centuries.

It was with pleasure, therefore, that we welcomed a representative of your Great Empire at the International Congress of Spiritualists which represents the modern scientific movement which is striving to bind closer the bonds between the physical and spiritual worlds.

Gradually modern science is confirming the hopes and aspirations of humanity. It is telling us that there is a spiritual world and that those who die, pass to that world to continue their development and minister to the spiritual needs of those who are left behind. I am sure that modern science can reinforce ancient philosophy upon this important point.

I want men to realise that union between the physical and spiritual worlds is not a matter for the priest alone. It is a matter for every individual soul. All of us have at times the passing of our dear ones, and all of us have longed for a touch of the vanished hand. The practice of modern Spiritualism and the experiments conducted in the seance-room can reunite the severed bonds. It can do more. It can put us in touch with the people who are not living in the spiritual world, and I want to insist that those who know most concerning the nature of the spirit-world, are those who live in it. Just as the telegraph and the telephone have united the nations in this world, so modern Spiritualism is uniting the Spiritual and Physical worlds, bringing comfort to those who mourn, strength to those who are weak, and help to those who are dis-consolate.

The task which the Spiritualists in India have to perform is to bring home this gigantic truth to millions of their countrymen. It is a message which will unite the world in the bonds of peace and fraternity, which will destroy all sense of sectionalism and enable all the nations of the world to unite in human brotherhood.

May I offer you my greetings and congratulations in the work you have undertaken, and wish you God-speed in the task which remains to be done.

May the Blessings of Almighty God be upon your efforts, and the guidance of the wise ones of the spirit-world lead you into the path of greatest usefulness."

BARCELONA CONGRESS 1934

The Fifth Session of the International Spiritualist Congress was held in Barcelona in 1934 when we had again the honour of representing India in that assembly. This time also we could gain new experiences in our visit to Europe, some of which were quite new and different from those obtained on previous occasions.

CONGRESS STORY

After our arrival in Barcelona our time was occupied in attending the various functions of the Congress, which lasted for full ten days. We had the privilege of attending the session for the fourth time as delegates from India, and our Spanish friends seemed greatly pleased by our presence. Many of them could not directly express their sentiments for want of a common language and had therefore to seek the services of interpreters who were always ready to help us. In spite of this barrier their expressions were more communicative than the words, as they were the real language of the heart. The following paragraph in the "Two Worlds" will give an idea of the appreciation of our presence at the Congress. The paper stated "From Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand is a true description of the assembled delegates at the International Congress at Barcelona. Mr. Jutsing was there as the representative of Greenland, whilst Mr. and Mrs. Rishi of Bombay again renewed acquaintance with the representatives of many climes," The "Psychic News" reported the following in its account of the Congress. "Mr. and Mrs. Rishi have made a thirteen days' journey from India to be here. They told me marvelous stories about their experiences in their own country."

The work of the Congress was carried on in three languages viz. Spanish, French and English. Most of the papers read at the Congress were translated in different languages and

the gist of the speeches was also summarised by interpreters. There were delegates from France, England, Cuba, Mexico, Holland, Belgium, Spanish America and several other nations who outlined the position of Spiritualism in their respective countries. The Congress met in the stately "Palace de Projections" which was placed at the disposal of the Spiritualists and could accomodate nearly two thousand persons. The surrounding handsome theatre in which most of the meetings were held could easily contain more than a thousand persons. Some of the leading authorities in Catalonia being interested in Spiritualism presided over a few functions and forcefully supported the cause. Vehemence seemed to be the common characteristic of Spanish-speaking countries as one could easily perceive from the fervour and enthusiasm with which they addressed the large meetings and carried on discussions in the various sections of the Congress. They laid great stress upon the philosophic side of the subject, and had no mediums for public demonstrations like those in England and America. Private circles are however held wherein the truth of spiritualism is demonstrated and the Spiritualists supplement their experiences by reading books on the subject. The enthusiasm of the people was clearly perceived by the huge numbers which attended the propaganda meetings arranged by the Congress. On every occasion the vehemence of the speakers was an outstanding feature which greatly impressed the foreign delegates.

REINCARNATION.

The main discussion was carried on regarding the principle of reincarnation. In fact it was a matter of keen controversy at the philosophic section and was hotly debated by several delegates. Learned papers were read in support of the doctrine by Spanish speakers. as well as by other representatives.

The English section seemed unconvinced by their arguments and ultimately a resolution was adopted mentioning the countries for and against the principle. As a large number of Spiritualists follow the teachings of Allen Kardec, there was a majority of countries believing in the doctrine of reincarnation and India was included in the list of those nations who admitted the principle. The resolution regarding reincarnation was a sort of compromise between different countries and the International Spiritualist Federation was urged to set up a permanent Committee to consider the question and to make recommendations to the future Congresses.

CONCLUSIONS.

Other resolutions unanimously readopted the conclusions arrived at in the preceding sessions of the Congress, regarding the fundamental principles of Spiritualism. The resolution regarding the abolition of war and the reduction of armaments clearly indicated the attitude of Spiritualists towards the most urgent problems of the world. The bringing together of persons working for the common cause in their respective countries was a great achievement of the Congress and will foster a tie of brotherhood among the Spiritualists of different nations.

EXCURSIONS.

The excursions to various places of interest near Barcelona were also an important feature of the Congress. Many delegates availed themselves of the opportunity and were immensely pleased by the grand site of the places visited by them. The illuminations on Sunday night at the Montjuich Fountains can never be forgotten on account of their marvellous beauty. All visitors admitted that it was the grandest in the world and they had not seen such superb phenomena anywhere else. The visit to the Pueblo Espanol, Roman Art Museum, and the Town

Hall greatly interested the delegates who were highly impressed by the magnificent Buildings. The President of the Generality of Catalonia evinced his keen interest in the subject by granting an interview to the delegates who had been invited for the purpose. The vast number of people who attended the propaganda meetings and the lecture by Dr. H. Torres, Deputy to the Catalonian Parliament was an unmistakable sign of their earnest desire to know this grand truth.

EXPERIENCES IN LONDON.

Our visit to London after the Congress enabled us to obtain new experiences about the higher phenomena of Spiritualism. We could take part in the experiments for Psychometry, Clairvoyance, Trance-Speaking, Direct Voice and Materialisation. Every time the results varied according to the development of the medium and the power of the spirit communicating or producing the phenomena. The experiments were held either in the well-known places like the Marylbone Spiritualist Association, Wigmore Psychic Centre, or the private circles of distinguished mediums. The trance-addresses of Red Cloud and Moon-trail, the Guides of Mrs. Roberts and Hambling were, to say the least, very impressive and showed the possibility of obtaining highly philosophic information from some unseen entities. They are often ready to help us, but usually the ignorance and apathy of the living act as insurmountable barriers. Red Cloud described that day at great length the Seven Spheres and answered the questions on the subject. He could also relieve by his touch a gentleman in the audience who was suffering from headache. The voice of the medium changed when he controlled her and the language was also very characteristic. His services are well-known to all who visit the meetings in Marylbone Spiritualist Association and other places. Moon-Trail, the Guide of Mr. Hambling, whose development is comparatively recent has

made a wonderful record within a short period. The day on which we attended the service in the Great Metropolitan Spiritualist Association, he spoke on "Measuring the Immeasurable." The address was a very grand performance and would have done credit to any well-known orator. The medium seemed to be in deep trance throughout the control by the spirit which lasted for about an hour, and the audience was spell-bound by the learned address.

A LECTURE IN G. M. S. A.

The secretary of the Association was kind enough to allow me an opportunity of speaking about the Spiritualistic movement in India, and a lecture was accordingly arranged on the 6th of October, when I could explain to the audience the activities in our country for the furtherance of this cause. The Association is fast growing and made wonderful progress during a short period.

ATTEMPTS FOR PHOTOGRAPHY.

Our chief endeavours during the stay were to obtain spirit-photographs for us, as well as for those in India, who wanted to have proofs by these methods. Experiments were accordingly arranged with Mr. John Myers, Mrs. Lee and Mr. Gibson, the well-known photographic mediums and about a dozen attempts were made by the usual methods. Every time the plates were brought by me, initialled before exposing and developed in our presence so that there could be no imputation of any fraud on the part of the mediums. The camera was also carefully examined and we can unhesitatingly affirm that there was no trickery in all these attempts. Usually two plates were exposed and the second was found to contain some extras, the first being utilised, as we were told, for gathering the power. The process was watched by us from beginning to end and it was a surprise to us every time to find some faces

on the plates after development. Usually they were Indian although not closely recognisable. The photographs were always taken by day and the exposure was much longer than that required for ordinary photography. Nevertheless the faces of the living did not suffer in any way either by over-exposure or any other fault.

CO-OPERATION OF SPIRITS

The spirit-friends who co-operated with us in these attempts, were very eager to have clear impressions and did their best to help us in the matter. They failed to understand why some times the faces of unrecognised persons appeared on the plates. The difference in the appearance of the features was explained by a familiar spirit to be due to the ectoplasm, which he said was a sort of power or varnish. When we asked about the photograph, he admitted that he was present at the experiments and the forehead and the nose were quite similar to his features. This ought to satisfy any reasonable man and convince him about the matter.

TRANSFIGURATION AND TRANCE-SPEAKING.

In the seances with Mrs. Lee and Mr. Gibson, besides obtaining spirit-photographs, we could witness transfiguration as well as trance-speaking by their guides. The face of Mr. Gibson when controlled by a Chinese spirit looked like that of a Chinaman and similar changes in appearance were noticed with different spirits. On the occasion when we attended the seance a familiar spirit made great efforts to speak through him, but found it difficult to convey his words as that was his first attempt. He seemed much excited and overjoyed for getting an opportunity to communicate in that way. To our great surprise he mentioned his name when we had not said anything about it to the medium in our talks. The spirit had to take the help of the guide for expressing his ideas. The sitting

was held in dim red light in a family circle and was conducted along strictly religious lines accompanied with music to harmonise the vibrations. This is a common feature with many many circles and greatly helps the conditions necessary for obtaining good results.

SCOTOGRAPHY.

Scotography was one of the gifts of Mr. Gibson and Mrs. Lee and we could see several remarkable pictures in our visit to their rooms. They were obtained without the aid of a camera simply by holding the plates in their hands by the mediums. Sometimes the pictures are found on handkerchiefs or pads of paper. The drawings on the walls of the rooms were most remarkable as they were drawn by spirits with crayons without any human touch. We had left a sealed pad with the mediums and found some spirit-faces on its pages when it was sent back to us in India,

MATERIALISATION SEANCE.

In a seance with Mrs. Henderson we could see materialised faces and hands. Direct voice was also heard through trumpets which were kept there for the purpose. These sittings were usually held in complete darkness and the sitters holding hands formed a chain. The faces and hands were dimly visible but the voice was pretty clear. It was difficult to ascertain the identity of the figures although they used to hold the luminous pads in their hands to show their faces. Subhadrabai reported next day that she was present there that time, but could not sufficiently show herself. Other sitters nearly ten in number could see and talk with their dear ones on the other side of life.

DIRECT VOICE AND TALAKINASIS

At the home-circle of Mr. Hannen Swaffer, the well-known journalist we got further opportunities of witnessing the higher phenomena of Spiritualism. The seance continued

for about three hours and was attended by Mr. Barbanell, the Editor of the *Psychic News*, Mr. Arthur Ford who can hear the dead speak and a few other ladies and gentlemen. The mediums were in deep trance when controlled by spirit and one of them was even dematerialised, and removed from the chair which she occupied. The voice could be freely heard through the trumpets which sometimes were floating in the room. The location of the trumpet could be ascertained from the luminous spots on them. Subhadrabai made attempts to talk through the trumpet and could just mention her name and some other words. We could feel the touch of the spirits in the sitting and the dematerialisation of the medium was clearly demonstrated by the trumpet touching every part of the empty chair. The movement of objects without physical touch was noticed when several articles were thrown on the floor from other parts of the room. The return of the medium was accompanied with a thud as she was thrown on the chair with much force.

A GUIDE'S ENCOURAGEMENT

The following report which appeared in the '*Psychic News*' will give an idea about talks we had with the spirits that time.

"In the country where, you serve there is as yet only a glimmer of light in a world of darkness," said a spirit-guide at Hannen Swaffer's home circle on Sunday, to V. D. Rishi and his wife who are India's greatest propagandists.

"That little point of light is kept burning by those who know that it is the light of the great spirit" went on the guide. It is by the service of the people like you that the light can grow and grow. As it grows, all ignorance and selfishness will disappear and in their place will come a new light of services which is the biggest part of the great Spirit. "That is very

big work and nothing in the world of matter can prevent those serving the cause from fulfilling their task. Your country has many hundreds of years of wrong teaching to undo."

"We are working single-handed," remarked Rishi.

"Oh no, you are not," said the guide. "There are always with you those from our side of life. The power of the spirit is greater than the power of the matter. So far you have never failed."

Later, the guide gave Rishi's encouragement in their task.

"You two have been brought together," he said. "It is all the part of the plan, so that together you can work to bring a new link to the many thousands of souls who are still in the darkness of material things."

A NEW LINK

"You have been brought to this circle that you may see what can be achieved by harmony. The contact with the spirit that you will get here will not be ended when the sitting is over. You will feel the power that will go with you and will be with you always."

"It will help to lift you up and will help you to fight every battle. It will remain with you and will help you to remove all the stones in your path. It will urge you on when you feel depressed, lift you up when your eyes are cast down, will bind you with the Great Spirit of all and will make you understand that those who serve may receive impressions from power that overcomes all the difficulties of earth.

"Know that you are never alone. Your fights are our fights and your difficulties, are our difficulties. When you weep we weep with you. When you rejoice we rejoice too.

"May the Great Spirit be with you in your journeys and in your mission. May His light illumine your heart and give

you a greater understanding of His purpose. May you feel that power which will sustain and uplift you and cause you to feel to be placed on the pathways which lead to His knowledge.

“May you feel His arms and His cloak around you and know that you are guided and protected in all that you seek to do in His service.”

Mr. Rishi spoke to two spirits who talked through the trumpet. Although the spirit voices were not very clear and the identity of the speakers was not satisfactorily established, yet Rishi was able to identify several words as being in the Hindustani language which was understood by no body in the room except Rishi and his wife.

Altogether eight spirits spoke through the trumpet and there were, at the end of the seance partial materialisations.”

SUBHADRABAI'S VISITS.

In all our travels Subhadrabai used to communicate with us whenever we attempted to do so according to our convenience. It was learnt from her that she was visiting Bombay almost every day and everything was going on there as usual. The information was corroborated by the correspondence which we used to get from India. She was seen on some occasions by clairvoyants and used to accompany us at Spiritualist meetings but not other places. No other spirit-friends were kind enough to visit us unless invited, and we had no opportunities of getting messages from them. At times we were told by some mediums about the presence of other spirits near us, but we found it difficult to believe the statement for want of confirmation.

Some of the experiments for Psychometry did not impress us and in the experiments for trance, arranged for a Sindhi friend regarding a very important matter, he got contradictory infor-

mation which greatly puzzled him. But on the whole we were much benefitted by our observations which largely added to our stock of information.

GLASGOW CONGRESS

The 6th Triennial Congress of International Spiritualist Federation was held in 1937 at Glasgow in the first week of September. Delegates from 18 countries had come to attend the Congress which was truly International. India was represented by three delegates as Mr. G. C. Sanjani, an advocate of Karachi had also accompanied us to attend the Congress. He had been very keenly interested in this knowledge and had specially sailed to Europe for this purpose.

INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION

After a short stay in Venice we went to Paris and visited the International Spiritualist Federation. It had its offices and a large Library in its own building which was dedicated by Jean Myers who was a keen supporter of this knowledge. We were shown the spacious hall where spiritualistic services were held and could see the seance room also. We were very much impressed by the large drawings that were hanging on the walls which were painted by the artists of the Spirit World through the medium's hand who did not know any drawing. As there was no other spiritualistic society in that beautiful city we proceeded to London which is truly the centre of world spiritualism.

PSYCHIC NEWS

In our visit to the Psychic News Office we were very cordially welcomed by Mr. W. A. Austin the Assistant Editor, as Mr. Barbanell, the Chief Editor had been to America on a propaganda tour. Both Mr. Austin and another member of the staff evinced keen interest in the progress of the movement

in India and asked some questions to know more fully why India lagged behind in a movement which they said preaches a philosophy very little different from that of India. They were surprised to hear that in such a vast country there was only one public medium to demonstrate the truth of Spirit return.

A TEST SEANCE

As they were very anxious to have a sitting with Mrs. Rishi, we had taken the Indicator with us when we visited the Psychic News Officer after a few days. We three, Mr. Austin and another member of the Psychic News formed the Circle. They were asked to concentrate upon some one whose presence they desired. Quite unknown to us they both desired to communicate with Silver Birch, the Guide of Hannen Swaffer's Circle. The response was immediate and we could know the presence of the spirit. The seance was held with the usual way and messages were received by Automatic Writing as well as on the Ouija Board. They asked certain test questions, the replies to which were so accurate that they were quite convinced by the experiment. They said that they had got every proof and the sitting was a success beyond doubt. It so charmed them that they asked us always to be in possession of the Indicator when I came to their office. The other member invited us to dine with him one day and also to hold a sitting there, for he said that his wife always doubted the Ouija Board method. Subsequently when we went to dine with the gentleman in his flat in London, we took the Indicator with ourselves; but as ill-luck would have it we left in the Bus. It was disappointing for all of us, but soon it struck us that we could also use an ordinary cup of tea to serve as an Indicator. Even with such a crude thing serving as an Indicator, the results were not affected at all and perfect evidence was given to the gentleman. He asked some questions in Hebrew Language

which neither Mr. Rishi nor his wife who were touching the Indicator ever knew. The gentleman had already been convinced in the "Psychic News office" and his wife felt the same, on that occasion.

The Psychic News published a detailed account of the seance that was held in the office, on its front page and about one and half a page was devoted to describe the work we were carrying on in India and the tremendous difficulties that beset us. The Psychic News gave wide publicity to our experiences and views about this subject and this attracted the attention of many spiritualists in London who became very anxious to meet us.

MRS. ROBERTSON'S HOME CIRCLE.

We then met Mrs. M. F. Robertson whom I knew for the last twelve years. Her husband was a very fine voice-medium and it was a great loss for her as well as to the movement when he recently passed over. Mrs. Robertson has formed her own home circle which met once a fortnight. Though she was a mental medium so far, the circle succeeded in getting some voices. She was later informed that her husband was helping her and that it was the co-operative mediumship of the two which produced the results. The circle was yet in development stage and the voices though not loud were sufficiently audible and recognisable. Mr. Robertson who had been known to us in his earthly life, greeted and sympathised with us in our arduous task and urged us to carry on. He assured us that we were not working alone, but there was a host of spirit-friends helping us invisibly. At this circle the spirit-friends apportioned a flower and presented it to Mrs. Rishi thus showing their appreciation of the noble work she was carrying on.

The voice came through the trumpet which was placed in the centre of the circle. The members in the circle did not sit stiff or morose nor in an over-religious spirit, but they were

sitting just as ordinary human beings, conversing and chatting with spirit-friends whose presence could never be doubted though they were invisible. Subsequently at another seance also of physical nature that we attended, we observed that the natural and cheerful outlook free from the cares and worries of the day, helps a great deal in the manifestations. The guides too add their own cheerful talk interspersed with human and innocent laughter. At this circle we were also informed by the guides that our loved ones were present but as they had never before communicated by this method, they rather found it difficult to use the trumpet. On our requesting that they should kindly make their presence known to us in some way the guides replied that they would try to touch us and that in the meantime the circle should go on singing some melodious tune. After about three or four minutes each of us felt the touch of a very fine drapery on the hands and face. It was so fine and soft. The earthly drapery could hardly stand comparison with it

A MATERIALISATION SEANCE

Mrs. Robertson once invited us to attend a materialisation sitting with Mrs. Lilly. There we saw about seven spirit forms materialised many of whom were recognised by the sitters. A spirit known to Mr. Sajani also materialised and was immediately recognised by him. The spirits stayed about more than one minute and carried on some conversation with their wives who were present there. They talked in natural tone with all the emotion and humour as they did in their earthly life. //

GREATER WORLD LEAGUE

Mr. C. A. Aeschimann, the Vice-President of the Greater World League on behalf of the League invited us to tea and on the next day to accompany him to West-cliff-on-sea and attend the Zodiac address. We accepted the kind invitation

and passed the afternoon with Mr. Aeschimann, Miss Moyes the medium and some other visitors of the Greater World League Sanctuary. They gave us a very warm welcome and took us to Westcliff-on-sea where the whole day we were the guests of the Greater World League. In the afternoon we attended the Zodiac's trance-addresses. His addresses had been already known to us but this was the first occasion when we actually heard it. It was very impressive and contained lofty ideas. We thoroughly enjoyed the day on the beautiful sea-side and the hospitality of the Greater World League.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS

Through the introduction of the Greater World League we got into touch with Mr. Falconer the well-known psychic photographer. We had five sittings with him as several requests had been made to us by bereaved persons in India for the photographs of their dear ones. On about four occasions the extras appeared on the plates which were developed in our presence. On two plates specially the faces were quite clear and there was no mistaking about their being Indian. We saw his studio where there were large enlargements of the spirit photographs obtained through his mediumship with the testimonials from the sitters of their recognition. He tried his best for us but after all the psychic results cannot be commanded.

CONGRESS SESSION

We left for Glasgow at the end of August for attending the Congress. It was a very pleasant week that we spent there amongst the delegates who had gathered there from eighteen countries of the world. The largest delegation had come from America amongst whom were two most wonderful mediums, Mr. Kelly the Ballot reading medium and Mr. Frank Decker the Direct-Voice medium. Fraternal feelings existed amongst

the delegates who had travelled vast distances to reach Glasgow, to relate their experiences and discuss the problems connected with the movement. Mr. Beversluis, Mr. George Brown, Mr. Berry in spite of their advanced age and indifferent health were as enthusiastic as the youth.

Several papers had been received by the Congress authorities from various delegates which dealt with some phase of the movement in their respective countries. All these papers had been published not only in English but also in French and one or two more European languages. Mr. Sajani's paper dealt with conditions in India and my paper too was of a similar nature and contained my views about the movement as gathered from fifteen years experience about the movement in our country.

The Congress met in two sections viz. philosophy and Science, to consider the papers and arrive at conclusions. Our papers were classed in the philosophy section. I read out my paper and Mr. Sujani also added a few words and laid stress upon the difficulties that faced us in India. As my paper contained reference to the controvertible problem of reincarnation, it evoked much interest and the delegates seemed to be determined to discuss it seriously. It may be mentioned here that at the last Congress in 1934 in Barcelona, this problem was hotly discussed but no definite conclusion could be arrived at there. My paper started the discussion again and hardly had two delegates spoken a few words on it. Mr. McIndoe the elected Chairman of the Congress session, who was listening with great interest got up and appealed to me and other delegates not to raise the question about re-incarnation, as he was afraid it would split the Congress. He added that at present the main problem with us was that of proving 'Survival' and communication which were of immediate importance. As regards re-incarnation it could be tackled with at some later

stage when some evidence for or against its acceptance became known. Though the delegates many of whom seemed to favour the belief of re-incarnation were anxious to continue the discussion I withdrew from my paper this topic of re-incarnation, and assured Mr. McIndoe that in the interest of the Congress I would not press the Congress to carry it on and added that I would be the last person to desire a split in the Congress. This was very much appreciated and further discussion on this problem ceased.

Our papers clearly brought out one fact that there was a veritable famine of mediums in India. The delegates were under the impression that India must have thousands of mediums. They sympathised a great deal with our efforts to carry on this great work in India under tremendous difficulties. A resolution was passed expressing full appreciation of our efforts in the propagation of this knowledge in India and recommending the I. S. F. Grand Committee that some ways and means must be found out to help the movement in India financially as far as possible. This resolution was placed on record and then passed on to the Grand Committee where it was unanimously accepted.

ANOTHER MATERIALISATION SEANCE

In Glasgow a Seance was arranged with Mrs. Hellen Duncan, the famous materialisation medium for us, and some American visitors. It was very remarkable, inasmuch as eight spirit forms were materialised some of which were recognised by the sitters and Mr. Sijnani could see the materialised form of his mother.

LONDON WEEK

The Congress was immediately followed by the 'LONDON WEEK' which had been specially arranged for the overseas visitors to give them an opportunity to see what

British Spiritualism had to offer. There we went through a varied programme of activities. In our short address at the reception in the Imperial Hotel, we appealed to the British Spiritualists to help us in this propaganda by sending some mediums to visit India. Mr. Hennen Swaffer the well-known Journalist who presided over the meeting, paid a glowing tribute to our efforts and greatly sympathised with our activities.

A SEANCE WITH FRANK DECKER

In a sitting with Mr. Decker, the famous voice-medium in spite of adverse conditions the voices were clearly heard. The hands materialised and putted the sitters. Mr. Sajnani's coat was removed and given to another sitter. A lady's chain was removed from her neck and put round that of another sitter. In pitch darkness no mistake was committed. Mr. Sajnani was also addressed by his fiancée and was very much surprised. He could have a heart to heart talk with her. One spirit spoke in Arabic language and greeted us with 'Salam Alekum'. The guide made me, Mr. Sajnani and one member of the circle sit on the knees of the medium who was sitting in the middle of the circle and asked us to hold his hands. This was done with a view to convince us about the reality of their independent voices. No one doubted Decker; none demanded any test but the spirit world knows that we earthly beings always doubt their existence, in spite of so much proof. They therefore, of their own accord, gave us this test. It was a marvellous sitting. There was the spirit of one boy vivacious in nature and adding to the conversation his own repartee and wit. It was the most wonderful seance we had ever attended. Mr. Decker is a very highly developed medium and in spite of his ill-health, the results were amazing. We were told by those who have seen him in America, that such a seance was nothing when compared with the results which Decker gets in America.

HANNEN SWAFFER'S CIRCLE

At Mrs. Hannen's private circle we could hear the fine address of their guide, Silver Birch. He spoke through his medium who was in trance. It was indeed a very sweet and lofty address that we had ever heard. Silver Birch had communicated through Mrs. Rishi in the office of the 'Psychic News' and had spoken to us on that occasion as well as three years ago. He had not forgotten it. He greeted us and encouraged us in our task. He is a sweet and lovable personality and spoke to us like a loving father.

SCOTOGRAPHY

We had very interesting results with Mrs. Midge Donohoe a fine scotographic-medium. In spite of her old age and indifferent health she was very enthusiastic and had put her heart and soul in the work which she silently carried on in the sanctuary of her quiet home. Her mediumship was of a peculiar sort. Twice a week she sat before retiring to bed, held some photographic plates in her hands, and concentrated after a short prayer. She mentally requested her guide to help the spirit to give his or her portrait on the plates and comfort the bereaved person, and in many cases after the plates were developed there appeared portraits which had been identified. We were amazed to see several albums containing thousands of such photographs received through her mediumship. She very kindly tried for us and on several occasions and on the plates appeared Indian faces with Indian names but they were unfortunately not known to us. The one scotograph contained a symbolical figure which was interpreted by her guides and conveyed a message of encouragement for us.

MORNING SITTINGS

In all our travels we used to make attempts for conversing with our spirit friends, as often as convenient. Almost every morning during our stay in London, Subhalrabai—my wife in

the spirit world—used to have a short talk about various matters regarding our visits to the seances at other places and did her best to make her presence felt to us; but was indifferent about coming to other places which we sometimes visited. Messages about the activities in Bombay were also occasionally received from her, and were subsequently confirmed by the letters from our friends.

Mr. Sajjani's fiancé was also equally regular and eager for conversing with him on these occasions and we used to get messages from her after Subhadrabai's talks. His other spirit friends also sometimes responded to his calls and gave convincing proofs of their presence. Our spirit friends were urging us to visit Europe and attend the Congress. The foregoing experience will clearly indicate that they were right in their suggestions.

A SEANCE IN PSYCHIC NEWS OFFICE

The following report appeared in the *Psychic News* of a seance held in its office as desired by the Editor.

"We have had a demonstration in the '*Psychic News*' Office, of the methods employed by the spirit world to spread the truths of Survival in India.

Mr. and Mrs. Rishi now in England for the International spiritualist Congress, held a seance with two members of the editorial staff and a third member of the Indian delegation, when Silver Birch guide of Hannen Swaffer's home circle gave evidence of his identity through automatic writing.

Once again, repeating the evidence he gave through, Mrs. Dolores Smith a fortnight ago, Silver Birch gave the private name by which he is known to only a few. He revealed his knowledge of an important decision which had been taken in the office that day, but which it was absolutely beyond the power of the Rishis to know normally,

Silver Birch wrote about Maurice Barbanell, now in America, and referred to one of the " Psychic News " staff by a name by which only his friends call him. This too the Rishis could not have known.

The guide also mentioned the name of an American friend of the Editors, and made a forecast concerning him.

Silver Birch wrote : " I know the man from India. " He had spoken to him at a sitting three years ago, when the Rishis attended the Swaffer's circle.

He concluded the sitting with his blessings and this message to the Indian : " We are all brothers, Good-bye till we meet in Glasgow. "

The sitting is even more evidential when the method of automatic writing is considered.

The communicating spirit was asked to indicate through whose hand the writing should be done. The sitter, a member of the staff, held the pencil lightly, but his hand was moved not by him, but by Rishi, who sat opposite and to whom the writing was upside down.

When the automatic writing was finished, Mrs. Rishi gave a demonstration with the Ouija Board, which spelled out the messages on a hastily prepared indicator.

Through this method Silver Birch said that he used a certain mental medium for a scientific reason which enables him to express his thoughts in the easiest way.

ACTIVITIES IN INDIA

The story of the movement at the present stage was narrated to the Editor who published the following account of the interview.

" A noted Indian Editor, a former Government minister, for many years his own automatic writing medium, prints

regularly in his daily paper leading articles inspired by "dead" politicians and writers prominent in India's life before their passing."

This fact was among many revealed to "*Psychic News*" by V. D. Rishi, the Conan Doyle of Indian Spiritualism, when he landed in England last week with the Indian Delegation to the International Spiritualist Congress.

They made a colourful picture; four Hindus, V. D. Rishi his wife in a sari, a young advocate and a pundit.

Rishi told how the famous editor regularly uses the spirit-inspired leading articles, which deal with current political problems.

Now the Editor's nephew who has developed mediumship is used by the politicians in the spirit world for automatic writing. Since Rishi was in England, last the record of prophetic utterances by the band working through this editor has grown enormously.

Not only are spiritual problems dealt with, but even earthquakes have been accurately forecast and long scientific explanations given of their cause.

In addition, a famous astrologer, now "dead" has given the intricate calculations on which he relies for some of his scientific prophecies. Rishi envies British Spiritualism, for he and his wife are fighting against the accumulated ignorances of centuries over a continent composed of scores of races and as many tongues.

But they go on doing their work, providing the same evidence in India that carries most conviction in this country—messages from, "dead" friends and relatives and loved ones in the particular language of the area to which they belonged.

CO-OPERATIVE MEDIUMSHIP

To Western Spiritualists, this may not seem all important but when you consider how varied are the languages in India and how strong is the conflict between members of the great faiths Hinduism and Mohmedanism, you will realise that to give accurate, convincing evidence of Survival is a great triumph.

The mediumship is co-operative, that is to say, neither Rishi nor his wife alone write the evidential communication. The sitter holds the pencil and is guided by one of the mediums sitting opposite as they did in our office.

Probably the greatest test of mediumship in a continent like India is to give names accurately, for in thousands of cases they are by no means easy, and a tendency to give children the names of deities does not simplify but confuse the work. Several members of the same family will have only a slight variation in name.

TWO IN A CONTINENT

Yet Rishi and his wife have convinced thousands. But, he pointed out, the very fact that Indians receive this evidence of Survival that satisfies them and they go on in the same old ways living within the framework of their own religions and culture.

That is the great difficulty, said Rishi. Lethargy pervades the whole continent and there are two mediums to do the work ! Yet he and his wife, go on travelling thousands of miles every year, writing articles engaging in controversies, and meeting the members of the various faiths along their own particular lines.

One of the greatest stumbling blocks is the popularity of the teaching of transmigration of souls. This is opposed to the theory

of reincarnation, but many Hindus prefer it, although it has not even the authority of the sacred books which unanimously declare the existence of the spirit world with a full life of experience after physical death.

Transmigration teaches the passage of the soul from one physical body to another—sometimes even animal body immediately after "death," without any life in the spirit world.

Rishi has found out that, in the co-operative mediumship, already described, the latent psychic powers of inquirers are stimulated and they themselves in time become mediums.

Then they sit in private circles and seldom venture to give public demonstrations.

Rishi and his wife have done everything that human beings can do to broadcast the message of Survival across a continent which has more religions, more philosophic ideas, more ignorance, and more lethargy than any other place in the world."

CHAPTER VI

Oka's Communications

Besides those who were near and dear to us while living we occasionally get into touch with others who were never known to us in their earthly existence. Some of them help the sitters in their own way and act as Guides in these experiments. This is the experience all over world and the Guides of famous mediums like Mrs. Estelle Roberts and Mrs. Morris are quite familiar to those who are in touch with the spiritualist movement. They come at the opportune time with a view to help those who are seeking more light and knowledge.

We have the good fortune of securing the co-operation of such a Guide who was known as Oka in this world. More than a dozen years ago he made his first appearance and has since then been constantly in touch with us. He has described his life-story to a certain extent which indeed is very interesting. But his spirit-existence is far more wonderful than his earthly career. He has by his various virtues of head and heart endeared himself to all who had the pleasure of listening to his talks. He is very truthful and obliging. His style is full of humour and inimitable. The internal evidence indicating his identity is so strong that his presence can never be doubted or denied. The story of our experiences would be incomplete without a special reference to his visits. Some of the numerous talks which we could have with him are given below.

LIKING FOR FLOWERS

Roses were brought by a sitter at a seance, as desired by a spirit-friend, and were kept on a table in our room. When we sat for communication, he was the first to manifest himself and he made the seance-table walk a few steps when the sitters

were simply touching it very lightly with their fingers. The table moved towards the place where the roses were kept, and halted touching the dish containing the flowers. When it was taken back to the original position he said 'Look here, I alone did not smell the flowers. There are three other spirits also. Keep the flowers beneath the table. (When this was done he expressed his satisfaction.) The other spirits were not going to come, but I asked them to do so.'

UNEXPECTED MESSAGES

One evening he gave a very interesting and unexpected message. He said "Last Wednesday while I was practising meditation, I had told others to awaken me soon. I am a beginner and hence have to tell others to awaken me after meditation. I can soon become unconscious in meditation, but cannot wake up so quickly and hence had told others to awaken me. But as I was sitting in a dark corner of the temple, they all went away after finishing their work, and I woke up by the sound of the Bhajan (Prayer accompanied with music.) I could not come here until it was finished, and hence I came hurriedly at 10 p. m., but there was nobody in the room. After a short time Subhalarani also came, and I was surprised to see her at that hour. I thought that perhaps it might be my mistake to come at that time, but the whole mystery was solved when she stated that she had not come for any special purpose.' The message indicates the duties of spirits, the similarity in several respects between this world and the next, and the unknown visits of our invisible friends.

Addressing Mr. Jannaldas Metha who was present that evening at a seance he said "All must try for the mother-land. On our side also, I have seen some resolute-minded persons coming with uneasy minds." The peculiarity of his communications is that sometimes he moves the table violently in all directions, but occasionally when it pleases him to do so, he gives such gentle

tilts that any one is sure to mark the difference. These mannerisms are very noteworthy and greatly impress the sitters

REFERENCE TO HIGHER SPIRITS

There is a hierarchy of spirits one above the other and the denizens of the other world sometimes refer to them on some important points. They have got also the same idea about time and space as we have here on earth. When asked about this point he stated the same fact, and in his own characteristic way drew a triangle describing his habitation in the other world. He emphatically asserted that every thing in the other world was constitutionally different from that on earth.

APPRECIATION BY OTHER SPIRITS.

Regarding Oka, another spirit spoke in very flattering terms. He said "This man is very honest and noble. He was always praying and praying. He was seeking me the whole day. When he came to me I was in the temple. I am not yet much free. I can come to your house but after some time."

A spirit while communicating with his relative voluntarily wrote "Look, look, he is coming." When asked what he meant by that he replied "My friend, Oka." These expressions show how Oka is loved by other spirits, and how voluntarily he sometimes attends our seances. The communicating spirit told us that Oka had rendered him great services by freeing him from the troubles of other malevolent entities in the next world.

Later on Oka himself began to write and refused to be thanked for what he had done and said that he regarded it as his duty. He added that he was doing all his work disinterestedly and advised others to do the same. When we explained our difficulties in following his advice he gave a long sermon emphasising the need of doing so. According to him malevolent spirits could be found up to the third plane, but they cannot go

higher. Those in the upper regions can visit the lower ones, and they sometimes are molested while passing through the latter. His advice was confirmed by Subhadrabai in her messages on subsequent occasions.

A LEVITATION EXPERIMENT

One evening he was present, but other spirits were requested to communicate first, as their friends in the circle were anxious to talk with them. When his turn came he began in his characteristic way. "How funny it is! Although I came first, I had to be the last to communicate; never mind I had come with full leisure. I tried hard for your (Ezekiel's) work. But what can I do? I am confused because it is all in English and half here and half there. The second point is about P. The spirit that created the trouble there is very near the earth. It seems to be a wandering spirit. I have commenced to teach Abraham to pray by counting beads. He was greatly laughing at me."

At this time Mr. T. B. Khare one of our old members entered the room when Oka offered him his salutation by pointing out the indicator to the word "Salutation" on the Board. That was very peculiar and means much to a keen observer. He said to Mr. Khare "Will you call me tomorrow morning in your meditation? But I would like to have a garland of flowers."

The seance was very important in several ways. At the outset when the table began to tilt violently and it was learnt that he was present, he was requested to lift all the legs of the table. He made such desperate attempts to lift them, that at three times it whirled round with great jerks under the hands of the sitters. It was a phenomenon worth seeing for any sceptic, who would surely have had to think about the matter.

After the tussle with the table Oka said "Hush, please wait a little. I am much fatigued." In accordance with his

desire we waited a while and then proceeded with further writing, when he said "Our bodies are real and substantial to us. We feel our pinch if we do so by our own fingers. We cannot see both worlds at one and the same time. For instance, look at the window. (Here the indicator on the Ouija Board moved towards the window in our room.) Can you see outside and inside through it at the same? It is something like that. We have not to do any thing for being able to see both ways. What I mean is that one cannot do so."

Q :—Are there any other spirits?

A :—Subhadrabai and a Parsi gentleman are here.

Subhadrabai then wrote as follows: "I and Oka were waiting since half-past four. I suggested the above illustration of a window to him. Why should I make other spirits wait, when I am a daily visitor? That is the reason why I don't write at this hour." (Although the sitters were the same, the manner of writing was entirely different from that of Oka.)

AN INSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

One evening when we had hardly sat for two minutes the table began to move violently and indicate that he had come. He seemed to be in a specially communicative mood that time and stated as follows:

"I know that you will not allow me to rest. I had specially sent Kalambikar (another spirit) to convey the message. But no, I had to come."

Q :—We did not ask him to send you.

A :—But he said "Go soon, You are called."

Q :—What about the work? (This refers to a matter which he was asked to inquire.)

A :—I simply inspired others and prayed that it must be done. I have done my duty. I am of opinion that it will be successful. You will know it next week.

Q:—What about the vision in the seance on Wednesday ?

A:—It was I. Did you see the cross pigment-mark on my forehead ? It is white. Next time I shall wear a Dhoti.

Q:—But why do you have the pigment-mark ?

A:—It is necessary for holiness. Brahmins must have it. Although it is true that there are no caste-distinctions here still it is considered desirable for every one to follow his religion or religious observances. Nobody is compelled to do that, but the tendency to do so arises in his heart. You will ask "How do they act who were not following them while living?" But I tell you that those very persons on coming here begin to do all these things regularly, as the tendency to do so is awakened in them. If any time they fail to do that, they themselves come to know of their mistake, and take care of not repeating it. I am telling this from self experience, because it is not that I was doing all these while living; but now every thing happens automatically, I have forgotten to say one thing that this does not apply to all. Here it is obligatory to act in accordance with one's religious thoughts and ideas on the physical plane."

Q:—What about me, as I am not following your religion ?
(Asked by a sitter.)

A:—On coming here you will do what is ordained by your religion in a greater degree.

A sitter said, " We are very thankful to you for your communication." Thereupon he expressed, "So am I. Because you offer me the opportunity to express my thoughts. Otherwise was it not impossible ? Is it not right what I say ?

Q:—May we hope to succeed in our mission ?

A:—God alone can do that. We can only pray.

Again he was present on one evening and said " What is the news ? I tried my utmost. I expressed my joy by violently moving the table because I was partly successful in my attempt to become visible. (This refers to the attempt for clair-

voyance before commencing the writing on the Ouija-Board). We two are here, I and my friend (Your brother).

Q :—Why could not Dr. Ezekiel see you ?

A :—I was trying, but he did not concentrate properly. Fix your mind. Consider that no one is near you. I have as yet to tell you something. What were you discussing before ? Dr. Abraham (Spirit) has told me about it. What more explanation do you want on that point ? (This refers to our discourse before the commencement of the seance. We were discussing his replies about caste-distinction in the spirit-world.) Religious differences must be observed ; otherwise it will be difficult to recognise the different castes. The differences are not observed in other matters here.

Q :—Will you please help in removing a spirit trouble ?

A :—Yes very gladly. To-morrow I shall come to your house with some of your deceased relatives. Let me see then who prevents them. Keep four chillis and fire ready. You sit at 6 p. m. and wait for ten minutes. If the trouble commences then throw them in the fire, and try again after they are burnt away. We shall be there, and see who it is that troubles.

Q :—Can you tell us something about the figures who take away the person at death ?

A :—They are human, but can assume the form in accordance with the individual's actions.

AN EXPERIMENT FOR SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHY.

An attempt was once made to photograph our spirit-friends. Two plates were exposed, one as desired by the spirits and the other in the ordinary way. The former was found to have two clear spots near the sitters, indicating the eyes of a spirit. The photograph was taken by one of our members and the development was done by him in the usual way. There was absolutely no reason why the two spots should

have come like that. There was darkness also behind the sitters and the spots have appeared on the black background. An interesting feature about the experiment was that one day Oka voluntarily wrote "Did you notice my two eyes in the photograph?" This was really surprising as none of the sitters expected this question from him, and clearly shows the genuineness of the phenomena.

CONFUSION IN TEMPLE.

In one seance we asked him some questions which he refused to answer and proceeded to narrate his own experience in the Spirit-World. The language was as usual very characteristic and humorous, and was never thought of by any of the sitters. It was a pretty long message and we were going to postpone it till the next sitting; but he would not allow it. The indicator on the Board was practically running over the Board pointing out letter by letter while Dr. Ezekiel and Mrs. Rishi were touching it. The message was very instructive and throws much light on the condition of the next world. He said, "You see I had been to the temple yesterday and sat there quietly. As I heard some noise outside I wished to see what it was. Hardly had I got up when our Superior came there. I could neither go nor stay. How could I go when he was standing in the door? When the noise seemed to be far-off, he turned towards me. I acted as if I was busily engaged in prayer; but it was very difficult to get up. I was standing there silently but could not manage to keep up the appearance. He came near me. I must state here at the outset, so that you may readily understand it, that there is a rule with us that after entering the temple nobody should go out for any reason without finishing his work. Do you understand? Now begin again from where I left before. He said "What were you thinking about? Did you intend to go out? Why did you stop then? Don't you know what happens by

going out leaving the work unfinished? One has to go out for good. Then I was a little confused. I managed to show my ignorance of this rule. Then he was a little pacified. And I was asked to follow several rules. The result was that I had to stay there for full two hours, for a work which could have been finished within ten minutes; and I had to do my daily duties also in addition. Therefore I state by personal experience that no one should try to do something else while engaged in doing one work."

This is indeed a very strange message and the manner in which it was received quite proves its genuineness. Such messages can be received only from enthusiastic spirit-friends like Oka, and it would be idle to expect the same from every spirit.

In the above message he stated that he managed to show ignorance of the rule of the other world. This was rather puzzling and some persons thought that it amounted to deception on his part. When he was asked about this point in the next seance he explained as follows:—"Showing does not amount to speaking. However great a man may be sometimes all of a sudden out of strange fear a momentary sensation is produced in him by circumstances without any effort on his part. What of an insignificant man like myself then? So taking into consideration this circumstance he (Superior) had to behave like that; because if he were to give me a severe punishment without explaining anything, the result will be quite the contrary. So we are excused twice, and are punished on the third occasion."

CAN SPIRITS SEE THOUGHTS?

One evening he was asked as to whether he could see thoughts. He replied that neither their colours nor their vibrations were visible to him, but he can see lines of thoughts emanating from the human brain. This was confirmed by

Subhadrabai and she added that it depends upon the powers of different spirits.

TRACING AN UNKNOWN SPIRIT.

The difficulty in finding out an unknown spirit was realised in one seance by him. He was requested to get into touch with a spirit whose name, surname and photograph was shown to him. In spite of all these details he said on a subsequent date as follows:—

“Although I asked for so much time, still it was of no avail. I inquired at almost all places. I cannot bring him, if he be in higher regions, because the denizens of lower regions are generally not allowed to visit the higher ones. I inquired upto Tapo Loka, but was helpless after that. Now all of you try to invoke him directly, so that if he be in the next world, he would certainly respond to your prayer.” According to his suggestion an attempt was made, and the spirit did respond to our call. He refused to write that day, but promised to write next time after about a fortnight. He was asked about his will, and gave some advice to his relatives who were present in the Circle. He would not speak with Oka also, and hence it was not possible to know more from him. Regarding this Oka said next day that the spirit was quite unwilling to say anything about his will. Although he did not talk with him, (Oka) still he (Oka) could gather this from his sullen face.

ATTEMPTS FOR PSYCHOGRAPHY.

The faces of discarnate entities, or other pictures and writings are sometimes obtained without exposing the plate through a Camera.

An attempt was made for this phenomenon one evening when Oka alone was present. The plate was held between the hands by four sitters for about ten minutes and he was

asked to impress upon it either his face or some writing. On developing, it was found that the plate recorded no impression. The subsequent experiment was much successful and we found on the plate two white clouds after development. There was absolutely no reason for the appearance of the clouds on it except the attempt of the spirits to impress their faces on the negative. The third attempt was remarkably successful and one half of the plate was found covered with white cloud. During the magnetisation, the hands of the sitters were automatically moving in a circular way. Oka explained this by saying that he managed to move the hands in that manner in order to draw the necessary power.

EXPLAINING AN INTERROGATORY MARK.

In his communication one evening at first he told all the persons in the room to sit down and be comfortable. Then he wanted to point out the mark of interrogation on the Ouija-Board. He used to point out figure one and zero on the board. We could not follow it and many times read it as 10. Then he made his meaning clear by asking us to put the zero below the figure of one instead of after it. This instantly explained the point and showed his cleverness. Such incidents, though trifling by themselves go to show the intelligence of our unseen friends. The theory of spirit return is based on such experiences and not simply the visual manifestation of the denizens of the next world.

QUESTIONS REGARDING FUTURE.

On one occasion in reply to the question about future he said, "We tell you the information, as we get it. If things do not happen as we say, it is due to the change in circumstances. We try to get information from other sources. We do our duty. You may say what you like. If you have no

faith in us, then find out some one from your world whom you consider best. I had heard about such persons, but I have no faith in them." He seemed a little excited for the persistence about future.

BLUNDER IN JAPA.

In his communications one evening, he said, "Recently I made a blunder in counting my Japa (repetition of a Mantra) The result was that I had to do it thrice as much. Religious injunctions are obligatory here. The Mantra which I repeat is of thirteen syllables. The repetition of these Mantras conduces to our upliftment."

His views about Japa were corroborated by Subhadrabai and other spirits also.

PECULIAR EXPRESSIONS.

Those who have attended our seances know that his individuality can never be mistaken. The way in which he begins his messages is also very peculiar. He always commences his writings by salutations. On one occasion he greatly interested the sitters by the peculiarity of his style of expressions. Once it became very difficult to understand what he meant by those expressions, and consequently he himself had to explain the meaning of his expressions. For instance he said that he was behind as well as ahead of another spirit. This was rather puzzling and we could not follow his meaning. When this point was referred to him he explained it by saying that he was moving round and round the other spirit so that sometimes he used to be ahead of him and sometimes behind him.

CALLING HIMSELF A HALF-MAN.

One evening he said "You need not thank me for all that I do for you. I do not deserve it, an humble half-man as I

am." It was beyond our comprehension to understand this expression. He explained it by saying that what he meant was he stayed in the other world and came to communicate in this world and hence he said so.

COMMUNICATIONS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

It is sometimes observed that communications are received in a language which the spirit did not know during his life-time. Many people are confused by this experience and fail to understand its reason. On one occasion he was asked about this point, whereupon he gave a very instructive and lucid message. He said, "This is generally done in two ways. The first is to control the brain of the medium by the spirit. But this requires much power for both. They must be equally powerful. The other way is to study the language in the next world. When once the brain is controlled, all the nerves are thereby affected. The control is of course temporary and hence does not cause any harm to the medium. Great responsibility of course lies upon the communicating spirit. How can they cause any harm? They come out of great love to console you. They manage it with care and never cause any harm to the mediums. It must be borne in mind that he alone who is not afraid of any injury will dare to make these efforts."

The last point could not be understood by the sitters and we interpreted it in a way quite different from what he meant. Thereupon he heartily laughed and stated that what he meant referred to the denizens of the next world and not to those who were living.

The whole message was characteristic and showed his usual intelligence.

On one occasion he said, "So long I used to refer to others for giving any opinion or advice. That caused many mistakes

and my friends here used to laugh at me for this. But now I am going to develop my own powers so that I shall be saved from the necessity of referring to others on each and every point."

His eagerness to communicate was remarkably perceived in one seance when he said, "Why shall I not come when you are giving an opportunity of speaking to dumb men like ourselves." The epithet is very appropriate and aptly shows the position of our departed ones in the other world. They are as it were dumb inasmuch as they cannot express their ideas unless we facilitate their path by holding seances etc. This is one of the main reasons why the knowledge of spirit-communication should be made popular and wide-spread.

ANNOYANCE BY THE TOUCH OF A PLATE.

One evening he was invoked specially to fix the time for spirit-photography. Shortly after the invocation the seance-table violently moved towards a plate lying in the room. We could not understand the reason thereof. When asked to explain the cause of the phenomena he said "Why did you keep the plate here? Don't you know that it contains dirty matter? While I was hurriedly coming in response to your call I happened to touch it. Now I shall have to bathe again." We could not understand how the physical plate could touch his etheric body and asked him to explain the point. Thereupon he stated that the air from the plate came in contact with his body and that was what he meant by the touch of the plate.

INFLUENCE OF CLOUDS ON COMMUNICATION.

It appears that a dull atmosphere makes it difficult for spirits to communicate. He observed about this point on one occasion that there is a variety of clouds such as dark and white. Black clouds make the atmosphere heavy while moon-light night is pleasant.

INTRODUCING A STRANGER.

On one evening he began his talk without the usual salutation. Preceding the communication the table moved violently and the sitters were convinced of his coming. He began abruptly thus, "He says that I am Ramrao. He is your ancestor. He looks very old. He asks you to have a talk with him." (This refers to a person who was standing outside the Circle, not taking part in the sitting).

It is interesting to note that even the name of the spirit wishing to communicate with the gentleman who had casually come there, was given on the Ouija Board through persons who could have absolutely no idea about it. The gentleman then joined the circle when further messages followed. Oka had to act as his interpreter as the spirit did not know Marathi or any other language besides his dialect. Then Oka wrote, "The spirit says that I cannot write Marathi. I had once casually heard your talk and so came here today to see you (gentleman). Tell my family that I am quite happy. I am free from all desires. Your father is in the sixth plane and I am in the seventh. So I don't always meet him. Your wife will have to suffer for sometime more. She will be cured, but will not be quite well. Peace. Peace. Peace.

DISCOURSE ON GUIDES.

On one occasion he was asked about the strange guides who occasionally control mediums through them. Thereupon he said, "The subject can be divided into two parts. The first point is that such persons (guides) are in search of individuals who are fit for this work. They then manifest themselves by inspiring them (mediums), who are thereby encouraged to undertake such work."

Next day he resumed his talk upon the same subject and said, "It is necessary to have a natural tendency for such work. Some difficulty is also experienced in having the sort

of persons whom you desire. The balance cannot be even unless there are equal weights on both sides. Although it is true that the discarnate great persons of antiquity are ignorant of these matters, still they also think that they should have conversation with persons of equal rank. But I consider this a mistake on their part. I am telling this from the information gathered yesterday. It does not refer to all spirits, because rarely all individuals act with uniform feelings. They must be above this thing. Then again I may tell you that persons who are here for ages have accomplished these matters in a different way."

Some persons are curious to know the name of Gurus (Governors) in the spirit-world. Oka and other spirit-friends usually refuse to give the name but one day when pressed about it he said, "We call them Brahmadrani (Versed in the knowledge of Brahma), but that is not their name."

THOUGHTS ON A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

One evening a musical instrument was played before the seance whereupon he made the following observations. He was simply asked whether he had anything to say about the instrument and the music in the seance-room upon which he wrote a long message. In fact he had to be brief as it was getting late. As usual his manner of writing greatly surprised the sitters. It is interesting to note that during the playing of instrument the indicator of the Ouija-Board would not at all move, but a rapid conversation followed immediately after its close. He said, "I thought that I was not to speak in the middle. Let me hear the music once more. Then I shall say a few words. Alright. You see this wall. (Here the Indicator moved towards a wall in the room.) Is it not painted? Tell me how it looks. How would it appear if it had been made of chunam and earth only? Which would look better? This or that? Suppose if four colours are put in four different

vessels, what would they be like? The wall of the earth and chunam is number one, the painted wall is number two and our vessels of colour is number three. Now suppose, we draw a picture of those colours. How long will you look at the colours only if I ask you to do? (Certainly not for a long time.) Let me know how the thin and thick colours will appear if a picture were drawn of them exerting our intelligence and I were to ask you to have a look at them. (I have to explain the matter, but shall be brief if you have no time). The conclusion is that the instrument which you just played upon is also of the same type. It has become so charming on account of the combination of five materials. Would it have been so if there had been merely a plank, wires and buttons etc.? What I mean to say is human beings can accomplish anything by exerting their brains. Now get up, ten minutes are over." (He had asked the sitters to wait for ten minutes so that he may finish his message that night. It refers to a Japanese stringed musical instrument.)

INTERESTING CLOSE OF A SEANCE.

One evening he closed the conversation in a very peculiar way. Every time he writes Namaskar (Salutation) at the end of his message. In accordance with this habit that day also he wrote half of the word and would not finish it, and being as it were put in mind of something said "Don't you remember that Kalambikar (Spirit) was here that day? He told me the whole account which very much amused me. All of you thought at that time that I was there and interrogated him accordingly." After finishing this narration he wrote the remaining part of the word Namaskar.

USE OF SPIRIT-COMMUNICATION.

He gave an interesting message on the above point on one occasion. He said, "Many spirits desire to communicate in this

way, and they act accordingly. There are others who do not like it. Those who wish to stay in the next world, and do not like to take re-birth, follow this path. It is true that those who have no desire do not feel its importance. Still they have to pass here their appointed time, and are consequently helpless in that respect. You may say that your prayer reaches them. But only he who is interested responds to it, while others feel nothing about it and do not mind it."

EAGERNESS FOR COMMUNICATION.

One day he communicated as follows:—"Now-a-days my time never passes miserably. I have given up my mischievous nature. How can I be troubled then? I work unsparingly for others, and hence feel benefited in a way. Nobody therefore dares to trouble me. If any one at all gets angry with me, I explain to him his mistake and point out his faults, as a consequence of which he is never inclined to trouble me. I adjust my conduct in this way. I shall bear any amount of trouble, but shall try to remove the sufferings of others. Forbearance is the right rule of conduct for your world. Tit for tat is harmful and is not always efficacious.

IMPORTANCE OF SPIRIT-COMMUNICATION.

On one occasion we requested him to give his messages. After some hesitation he consented and said, "Friends, my humble salutations to you. Please try as much as you can. Although this work seems so simple it is full of mystery and deep significance. In order to explain its apparent simplicity suppose I say, today I had been to talk with the dead or to know the truth of Spiritualism. You will naturally ask what it is. The meaning is that the name alone cannot signify anything. It must be accompanied by experience. Knowledge cannot be obtained without it. Oil can be got even from sand after great efforts. This is true in this knowledge also. Can

you understand anything only by the word "Spiritualism"? Certainly not. You must try to gain experience."

DASERA GREETINGS.

On one Dasera Day he gave his greetings to the sitters in his characteristic way. He composed a short verse embodying his thoughts and surprised all who were present in the seance. He occasionally writes his ideas in verse which is a development in his messages and which is beyond the power of the persons who act as mediums on such occasions.

MAN AND HIS SHEATHS.

It is stated in some religious books that man has got various envelopes (Koshas) such as the Annamaya Kosha (Physical) Pranamaya Kosha (Etheric) and some more. The greater the spirituality of an individual, the higher would be his Kosha (Envelope). That is a common belief and as such he was questioned about the particular envelopes of various saints who were commonly regarded to be in a very high order of the sheath. The replies were not always consistent with the preconceived notions of the sitters, and it was rather puzzling to find a great saint in the second or third sheath. Oka explained this mystery by saying that these elevated souls can change their envelopes for a certain period. This was illuminating and threw some light upon the obscure point. He added that the information was confidential and he was disclosing it only to us. The change of sheath does not alter the appearance of an individual, but there is a corresponding difference in his lustre. So also the bodies of spirits in different places are similar in appearance, and the various planes are meant for successive stages of existence.

UNEXPECTED APPEARANCES.

In our tour to Jaipur, he appeared quite unexpectedly and stated that he was urged to come soon by Saraswatibai (A

familiar spirit). On two other occasions at Dehradun and Delhi he manifested without any invocation and replied in verse. He seemed to be rather reluctant to communicate in these parts and promised to come at an interval of about a fortnight.

While we were conversing with a spirit in Calcutta we inquired whether there was any other entity. We were told that there was one known to us. This was rather surprising as the entities connected with us do not generally appear while talking with other spirit-friends. On resorting to the Ouija Board we found that Oka was there and he commenced writing in his usual way. He seemed anxious about our early return to Bombay and in reply to our statement that we make no difference between other provinces he said, "That may be, but a step-mother cannot be like the real one." The gentleman who was sitting in the circle believed that he had some clairvoyant faculty and wanted to get it ascertained from Oka. In his characteristic way he asked the gentleman to show his fingers and after a careful observation stated, "It seems that he has some faculty but it needs development." The approximate period for the unfoldment of the power was also suggested, but the most interesting phenomena was the minute examination of the nails when the Indicator touched every finger of the gentleman.

In Bangalore he favoured us with his visits on two occasions and evinced his keen interest in our affairs. Among other things he said, "Have you not as yet finished the work here? The people in Bombay ask me when are you going to return. So I came to see you. (This referred to the seances which our Bombay friends used to hold in our absence.) I am as it were placed in a fix like a boy whom the mother would not feed and the father would take no interest in him."

THE BROKEN GLASS-PANE.

In our seances during the tours he used to communicate with us occasionally as it pleased him. He used to tell us that

he was very often visiting the rooms in Bombay with a view to look after them. On one occasion at Calcutta when asked about the condition of the place he said that it was rather soiled by the rains and a glass-pane of the window was broken. After our return we found to our great surprise that the condition of the rooms was as described by him and one of the panes of the window was actually broken.

Regarding this matter another spirit-friend a Parsi youth told his father in a seance that Oka had once brought him to the place and showed the broken glass-pane. The communication was quite unexpected and greatly surprised all the sitters. He stated also that Oka had told him that he was acting as the door-keeper. Messages like these undoubtedly indicate the keen interest which some discarnate entities continue to take in those whom they love.

TALKS REGARDING DIVALI CELEBRATIONS.

In his usual way he remarked as follows in a verse after the Diwali celebration.

"The Diwali festival has come to end. Your mind is now at rest, but although I was from time to time expecting with folded hands to get flowers, nobody offered me a single rose to smell." The expressions indicate his inordinate desire for flowers.

On one Ekadeshi day there were hardly any sitters. Thereupon he began saying, "Have all persons decided to take rest today?" Regarding the fast he expressed, "Religion is going to dogs. Where are those Ekadashis which we used to have? Real fasts are those in which the throat is dried up and the whole body becomes inactive. Majority of people now blindly follow one another."

He was asked whether he had developed spiritual powers during his earthly life, whereupon he replied, "It is not an easy thing like eating a ripe fruit."

PATRIOTISM.

On one occasion his patriotism was remarkably experienced when he was requested to give a message for the new year. He said "There are still two and a half months for that. Why do you ask for it now?" This was very characteristic inasmuch as according to the Hindu calendar the period was just the same as mentioned by him. It is needless to point out that none of the sitters ever entertained the idea.

POINTING OUT A MISTAKE.

On one occasion he wrote his salutation in verse and stated that the service of humanity ensures one's happiness in the next world. A peculiar incident on that occasion was that the person taking down his message wrote long 'si' instead of short one, whereupon he pointed out the writer's mistake to the sitters, which greatly impressed all who were present on the occasion.

VIEWS ABOUT KILLING.

On our return to Bombay after about three and a half months, Oka was ready to offer his greetings to us. We had not the pleasure of communicating with him for a pretty long time on account of his attachment for Bombay. In the very first seance after our arrival he was kind enough to appear and wrote in his characteristic way. He said, "Did you now think of meeting the mother? (It is necessary to point out in this connection that he regards Bombay as the mother.) I had not ceased communicating. I was always paying visits and was quenching my thirst. My brother (another spirit friend) was also there. I drove out all those who were obstructing."

An interesting phenomenon in this seance was that the Indicator on the Ouija Board thrice turned towards a corner in the room. When asked the reason thereof he said that Subhadrabai had come and was standing that side.

On another occasion he wrote a verse to the following effect: "This is as it were an abode of peace. Just accept salutations and hear my messages after a long time, dear ones. My work is like the roots of a Banyan tree. I have to look to all sides."

That day a sitter wanted to know whether killing insects is a sin. The question was explained to him, whereupon he said, "Insects also die a natural death or are killed. But sometimes I feel that the latter amounts to sin. Again I think that if they are harmful, then why should it be regarded a sin to kill them? If serpents and scorpions are left free they injure others, and if they are killed it is sinful. How to act then? Therefore my mind is divided. It is not so with you. Of course God creates everything. Nobody else can."

ATTENDING A MEETING.

When requested to attend a lecture he promised to do so and the following conversation took place on the subsequent evening. "Have I ever not kept my promise? I was present at the meeting but what can I understand there? You and the audience could appreciate the English language. I could not understand anything. Four persons were about to ask some questions. There were two Mohomedans in the audience. (This was very evidential as two Muslims had attended the meeting, and he seems to have noted it.) You need not stay here indefinitely." He concluded his message by salutation in verse.

VIEWS REGARDING EARTH-QUAKES.

Regarding the Quetta catastrophe he expressed:—"Human knowledge fails before Divine power. It is true that thousands met a premature death but remember that twice the number will be born every year. As all these persons passed away suddenly, every one is sure to feel attached to his relatives, money and property. This is likely to degrade them. But it

is all due to their Karma. Still there is a way by which they can be helped. You should all pray for them irrespective of caste, creed and religion. I would have also joined you on such an occasion, but God has called me here to welcome them."

REGRET.

Referring to the absence of some of the sitters she said in verse, "I made friendship and intimacy with them but their apathy makes me uneasy." That day he failed to offer his salutations at the beginning. Regarding that omission he said, "I have made a mistake today. Guess! "It immediately struck us that he must be referring to his omission about the salutation. On pointing out the matter he wrote a verse expressing his salutations.

REFERENCE TO CALL-BELL.

On another occasion he violently moved the table and made it walk towards the stand on which the Spirit Call-Bell was usually kept. That evening it was taken out of the glass-case to show it to some of the visitors. Referring to that matter he moved the table towards that direction and said in a verse, "A new occasion arose and the cage became empty." When requested to ring the Bell he replied, "All my friends have gone. How can it be done now?"

SOME INTERESTING TALKS.

Once he as it were complained about his inability of getting a chance of talking as other spirits were always conversing with their dear ones on earth.

To a question inquiring the name of the spirit that was communicating, he very humorously replied, "Why do you ask like this when Oka is present here?" That was rather unusual as he always prefers to communicate last. But that day he as it were took a fancy to be the first and added, "Do

you mean that an old man like me should always remain behind ? ”

In a seance he had arranged an interview between a sitter and his spirit-father as promised. Referring to the incident he expressed, “ I came running straight and brought about the meeting of the father and son.” That time he chose to be the last and stated that he gave preference to elders, as he was like a dry leaf. His meaning was incomprehensible to all the sitters who tried their best to make out the import of his statement. The sense could be understood only when he gave hints about the verse.

On the day previous to Ganesh Chaturthi festival, he spontaneously wrote, “ The holy deity has come home. Oh, hurry up to offer him prayers.” Further on he said, “ I would like to have a sweet ball (Modak) tomorrow. Wash the place clean thrice and keep the ball on a plantain leaf here in the seance-room. Bring roses also.”

This was accordingly done at the appointed hour. Next day he said, that he had come with Subhadrabai at the time given by him.

Before saying anything about the matter he wrote of his own accord a verse to the following effect. “ Time is flying. Life is being wasted. Why don't you worship Rama ? ” On being asked the reason of his expression he laughed heartily and said, “ I could not pass my time, so I was praying like that.”

Addressing one of our friends who had come to the seance after a long time he said, “ I can never forget the acquaintance with those who have long-standing intimacy.” After offering salutations he questioned him, “ Where had the bee been wandering ? ”

During the tour he was not present at any of the seances. But just after our return to Bombay he responded and wrote, “ Where were you engaged roaming leaving Oka here ? ”

A spirit while communicating stated that he was laughing at him. When we interrogated him about this point he replied that he did so on seeing the hurried writing of the young man. Regarding the other world he reiterated that every thing in the other world was composed of fine form of matter.

Once he was specially evoked as we had not the pleasure of having his communications for a long time. He offered his greetings to Mr. Khare who was in the circle and promised to become visible to him in his morning prayers. Mr. Khare had the pleasure of clairvoyantly seeing him in his meditation and he reported to us the vision which he had that time.

On the eve of a Gathering of Spiritualistic Society, he said, "I am a queer man. All of you should take part in this work and bring it to a successful end. This is a work that can be done by all. It is useful if you take interest in it, but should not mind the troubles that are necessary in this matter."

In one photograph there was a pretty clear face besides those of the sitters. He confirmed it to be his own and added that it was oval. When describing the face he said that it resembled Shaligram. (an oval stone) The word was so uncommon that it could never have occurred to any of the sitters.

He helped one of the sitters by removing the spirit-trouble at her place. Some mischievous spirits were interfering in the attempts that she used to do at her place. He had promised to help her and accordingly did manage to ward off the interference of the spirit. Without any question by the sitters he said, "I have done my work. I gave a sound thrashing to that spirit. Now he will not trouble you." His statement was confirmed by another spirit who was present in the seance. It is of course mysterious as to how he managed to do such benevolent deeds.

In a pretty long conversation with him on one occasion he gave much information about the nature of the etheric body.

language of the spirits, and the possibility of getting into touch with highly evolved individuals in the next world. Regarding last point he said that there are two difficulties in the way. First of all inquiry will have to be made about the existence of such beings as they remain in solitude and secondly they are generally averse to come to earth-plane.

HUMOUR.

In a private seance just after tea he jokingly remarked in verse. "You took the tea together and forgot about the experiment. I and tea are poles asunder. It is true that I am fond of friends, but not of tea." Making a pun upon the word tea he said, "It is one and the same. Give me flowers instead of tea. You may take tea while I shall smell flowers."

INTRODUCTION BY ANOTHER SPIRIT.

A familiar spirit unexpectedly brought Oka and introduced him to all the sitters. He said, "Father, I have brought a new friend. Do you know? Just imagine. He is known to all. You are right in guessing. He is Oka. I speak with him in broken Marathi. He does not know English. He is very fond of flowers. He inquired about my address from late Mrs. Rishi. I asked him, "How did you come to me?" He replied that he heard yesterday that Mr. Rishi will be here, so he came with me. Then I told him how my mama gives me flowers and other things. He was pleased, so I invited him to our house, and he accepted the invitation willingly; and he is here now."

Q:—How did late Mrs. Rishi know your address?

A:—She knows me indirectly. Do you remember we had been to Mr. Rishi's house?

"Oka is laughing. He will not take your thanks. He says it is my duty. He likes the next world very much. He says first I should finish then he would write."

After the above talk, Oka wrote a few sentences in his characteristic way. He said, "I am an intruder. Is it not? I shall try to become visible to you. My sign of identity is the 'Gandha' on my forehead and the rosary of Rudraksa beads round my neck. You can know my presence by these marks."

CHAPTER VII

INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS.

A DROWNING TRAGEDY.

In a seance at Mussoorie messages were obtained from a boy who passed over under tragic circumstances by drowning at Juhu near Bombay. He quickly responded and gave very touching communications. Among other things he said to his relatives "I am not dead. I am here. If you cry like this I shall go. God has given me a more beautiful body than yours. I thought of coming back but then it occurred to me that if I die again my relatives will be sorry. I have not the permission to give the name of my body-guard here. One thing is troubling me that here I have not got my companions." He expressed his feelings by violent movements of the Table and also in other manner. Regarding his photographs he observed: "Why do you want them? They are mere colours." He stated that he was looking towards his feet when he was sinking. This was very characteristic as he was swallowed by the quick-sands on the shore and his attention might have been naturally drawn towards his feet.

A SEANCE AND ITS SEQUEL.

The eagerness of discarnate entities to communicate with the living was surprisingly demonstrated on one occasion. In a seance at Mussoorie a lady got several messages from her deceased mother through automatic writing, and the experiment was closed in the usual way. A few minutes after we had left the room, she was controlled by the spirit who seemed very eager to express her ideas. One of the sitters intimated the matter to us and on returning to the

place we found the lady lying quite unconscious on her bed and attempting to speak some words. It was evident that the spirit had taken full control of her body and was still there in spite of her promise to retire. From her talks we could understand that she felt greatly annoyed at the alleged indifference of her relatives towards her and repeatedly urged them not to do so. That was the main point in her communications and after about an hour's persuasion and assurances the spirit left her control. The lady after resuming her normal consciousness seemed to be quite unaware of what had happened during the period.

Such instances of involuntary trance are very rare, and we usually find the spirit-friends retiring after the seance is formally closed. Some do express their desire to stay for a few minutes more, but such violent attempts are rare phenomena. This was the second of its kind during our observations extending over more than a dozen years.

A DINNER FOR SPIRITS.

Some persons after getting a number of messages from their familiar spirits desire to offer food and other things to them with a view to express their affection. The discarnate beings are generally indifferent to such things, and do not attach any importance to such matters. A spirit-friend, however, when asked on one occasion at Dehradun gave certain instructions which were faithfully carried out. Subhadrabai was also present at the dinner along with the invoked spirit, and when asked about the offerings both of them expressed their satisfaction for it. It need hardly be pointed out that the pleasure which they derived from such expressions of affection was purely mental and there was no change in the food placed in the dishes.

A SPIRIT-DOCTOR'S ADVICE.

A gentleman was earnestly awaiting to meet us in

Benares with a view to consult a spirit-doctor as his wife had been suffering from a peculiar muscular pain, and no medical practitioner could give her any relief. The spirit who was a well-known doctor at Muttra was accordingly invoked and he advised electric treatment for the lady. In the first invocation after giving his advice he added that he would consult his father who also was in the spirit-world and had a record of fifty years' practice. Next time he stated that his father had confirmed his opinion.

SPIRIT-GUIDANCE.

The discarnate entities continue to take interest in the affairs of those whom they love and sometimes give valuable advice also. A gentleman in Bombay who is a convinced Spiritualist and a great sympathiser of our activities once intimated the following experiences to us when we were on tour. He wrote, "A daughter of mine who had come down here for her vacation from the Boarding school was laid up with typhoid. The case had become very serious about the time I received your letter on account of the hemorrhages due to ulceration of the intestines. The fever lasted exactly sixty days and twice her life was despaired of. I thought of you and Mrs. Rishi, but help came unexpectedly. I received a letter from a friend of mine in which was enclosed a letter from a lady who had received a message from my son on the other side. It stated exactly how my daughter's malady would take the course and when she would leave the bed. The day after, another message from the same source and about the same as the former was sent to me by another gentleman. I am glad things turned out as stated in these two messages. And yet ignorant men laugh at Spiritualism."

A SPIRIT ASKS FOR A CUP OF TEA.

On one occasion at Simla a departed girl expressed a

desire to have a cup of tea which was accordingly placed in the seance-room. Of course there was no reduction in the quantity, but we are repeatedly told by the discarnate entities that they are pleased by the things thus offered to them. They smell them and are thereby satisfied. As in other matters, one should not be dogmatic about such occurrences and rely upon statements received from those who are in the next world. It would be worthwhile to point out that the girl was very fond of tea and could not have it as the doctors had prohibited her during her last illness. The craving seems to have been carried over and she accordingly expressed the desire for a cup of tea.

A VIVID DREAM.

The girl had promised her grandmother that she would meet her in dream. Precisely at the appointed hour the lady heard distinct calls from the girl but there could be no further talks as the lady woke up with a vivid recollection of the girl's voice. The fact of her coming at that hour was confirmed by her in subsequent messages received from her on the following day. It is worthwhile to note that the lady had no dream-experience like that since the passing of the girl although she greatly yearned to meet her at least in dream.

A SPIRIT-GUARDIAN'S HELP.

A Medical Officer in one of the Himalayan States was anxious to communicate with his young son who passed away after a short illness. The boy could hardly write his name, but to our great surprise it was found that he had a guide with him to help him. The guide stated his name as Bhagatram and mentioned that he had taken upon himself the task of the child's guardianship. He expressed what the child wanted to communicate to his father. We were told that the boy was not happy in spite of his being in a high plane.

The guide being asked about the matter explained by saying that the child often remembers his parents which was the cause of his uneasiness. The father was very anxious to have daily visits from his beloved son and the boy also seemed eager for that, but could not manage to do so. Regarding this the spirit-guardian of the boy expressed that he would not allow him to do so as in that case the boy would press him for more visits which would be troublesome to the guardian. Sometimes the messages of Bhagatram the spirit-guide were highly philosophical and greatly amazed all the sitters by their spontaneity and gravity of thought. When asked as to why he had taken up the work of acting as the guardian of the boy said, "Do you know how a life-less kite will fly?" This was a suggestive reply which silenced the questioner.

A SPIRIT CAUSES ELECTRIC SHOCKS.

On one occasion the guide was asked whether his ward will be able to make his existence felt to his father in some way. He said that he will try and asked the gentleman to wait for five minutes. During the period the medical officer received electric shocks in his left-hand fingers as promised. This was a very striking incident which greatly impressed all the sitters.

FRIVOLOUS SITTERS ADMONISHED.

Gravity in the sitters is greatly desired by the spirit-friends. It is also essential for obtaining satisfactory results in the seance. A gentleman in Simla was strongly reprimanded by his father when he along with other sitters could not be sufficiently serious during the experiment. The communicating spirit said to the sitters, "You are no better than asses." He was a grave man during his life-time and his messages on other occasions were full of valuable advice. Among other things he told his son, "Words are easy but

deeds are difficult. I wish you to do some charity. I do not mean that you should spend money like anything. But you should help those who are helpless."

A BROTHER'S ADVICE.

The brother of a gentleman in Simla gave him very valuable advice regarding his earthly affairs. He seemed quite in touch with his family matters and expressed his solicitude for his relations. He was ignorant of English, but the messages were being delivered in that language. The anomaly was explained when we were told that he had a guide with him who was acting as his interpreter. Within a few attempts this gentleman succeeded in obtaining messages independently of our help. A few years ago he had studied the subject to a certain extent, but had several misconceptions owing to want of proper guidance.

HELP BY A LITERATE SPIRIT.

The help of a literate spirit is sometimes necessary for knowing the ideas of those who could not write during their earthly life. A Sikh gentleman in Simla was anxious to talk with his father but the latter while living could write nothing besides his name. The difficulty in obtaining messages was overcome by seeking the cooperation of a mutual friend, an Englishman, who was a great benefactor of the family. The father brought him to the seance-room within five minutes, when the messages could be freely received from him on the Ouija Board. The other spirit seemed very communicative and demonstrated his identity by the style of his writing and other unmistakable signs.

INDIFFERENCE TO WORLDLY MATTERS.

The discarnate entities seem to attach little importance to earthly things like their pictures, or statues. A gentleman in Bombay while talking with his beloved son asked him

about his newly made picture. He replied, "Father they are all colours. I am near you." Similar expressions were several times obtained from Subhadrabai when she was consulted about her bust which is kept in our room. She was quite indifferent to that sort of memorial and did not express any satisfaction on that account. These experiences go to show that the erection of statues or other memorials for the dead without caring to converse with them is like running after the shadow neglecting the substance.

INDIFFERENCE TO EARTHLY REMAINS.

One spirit in Karachi when asked about the transference of his earthly remains expressed his indifference regarding the matter and said that he was no longer in the grave. It is repeatedly experienced that discarnate entities feel nothing regarding their physical envelopes or earthly belongings.

NUMBER OF PLANES.

The departed persons usually mention the number of the plane in which they are living. When asked about the total number, we are told that they are seven; but it is worthwhile to remember that there are sections in each of them. In a recent seance a spirit-friend staying in the seventh plane stated that there are thirty sections in that plane also. It will thus be clear that it is a vast world and one should not be dogmatic about matters pertaining to the next world.

PROOFS ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF A SPIRIT.

In one of our seances in Bombay a gentleman was very anxious to have convincing proofs about the identity of the communicating spirit. In particular he wanted to know from his father something which he did not know and which could not possibly come from his subconscious mind. He was successful in the attempts and could learn from his father the things which were known only to his sister. Among

others he stated that he had a mole on his back and that he had long talks with her about education. The information was duly communicated to his sister and was admitted by her to be quite correct. The gentleman was very young when he proceeded to England for further studies and the father had been no more before his return.

VERIFICATION OF A SPIRIT-MESSAGE.

A gentleman from Sind had come here once with a view to attend our Seances. He could get into touch with his dear wife who gave him several consoling messages. Among other things she mentioned the death of their cook also whose name had never been thought of at that time. In fact it was not known to anybody in the circle. The gentleman himself did not know that the cook had passed away. On returning home inquiries were made regarding the matter and it was found by him quite correct as stated by his spirit-wife. He wrote "I wonder whether you remember an incident which happened in that very first sitting of mine at yours. She had written that in addition to my sister-in-law and my brother-in-law who had come with her there was some one by name Haso who was once our cook at Banamali. On other occasions I had inquired from her in my sittings with you if I had followed her correctly as regards our servant Haso. She had emphatic 'Yes.' On inquiry he too had said that he died about six months ago (i. e. December 1930). I had never thought of that man at all and in fact never dreamt of hearing about him in my first sitting. I was determined to make inquiries about him though he belonged to a remote village. I am glad to inform you that I succeeded and the facts have come out to be surprisingly true both as regards his death and the time of its occurrence. To you perhaps it might be one of the ordinary experiences, but for me it has a special significance

coming as it is by volition of some one behind the scene. It seems to have been designed by some one unknown to me for my good that I should have strong evidential proof of life beyond the veil at my very first sitting."

STRANGE EXPERIENCES.

A gentleman from Shrinagar (Behar) reported the following communications from his brother. " At Shree Ayodhya, my brother had demanded Lichis. Here also I asked him several times, and at all times he made that demand. Yesterday I distributed 2000 Lichis to the Brahmins, out of which 1500 were distributed here and 500 were sent to Shree Ayodhya. This morning I had invoked his spirit and when he was asked as to how many Lichis he had got, he replied that he had only 1500. I twice asked this question and got the same answer. We were for some time puzzled by this wrong figure, but at once it struck us that only 1500 Lichis were actually distributed up till now and 500 were on the way to Ayodhya. He might have received 1500 only by this time and might receive the balance 500 when they were taken by the Brahmins there. As the entire 2000 Lichis were offered to him by mouth here by Panditji they must by our old theory pass off to him, but it does not seem to be true."

A gentleman once reported his personal experience in spirit-communication. In his family circle, he used to invoke spirits in a very crude way taking the help as he said, of a primus stove. One day he inquired from his spirit-friend, as to the time when a particular person would come. The spirit replied that he would arrive next day at 9 a. m. This time having passed, they were rather puzzled by the inaccuracy of the message. But the mystery was solved when the person arrived home at about 2 p. m. and stated that he did reach the station at 9 a. m. but could not get a conveyance for finishing the rest of the journey.

A gentleman from Lucknow wrote, "With regret I informed you that my house at Mirzapur is haunted by an evil spirit for the last seven months. The whole damage is estimated to be a thousand and the life of a newly born child. In the beginning it started with the pelting of stones, bricks, clay and other things. Then the things of the house began to disappear and some were thrown one by one after intervals. Things went on like this for sometime. The things which are put in locked boxes and almiras come out and are thrown in the courtyard of the house. Cushions, gaddas, blankets, saris and other clothes were burnt to ashes. The cloth put in a box catches fire. The things put in an almira come out of their own accord. Sometimes you see that man's refuse is thrown here and there in the house. Every day such things occur. How there is pelting of very huge stones? Nothing is safe in the house. The things disappear before the eyes, having gone very rapidly. We were compelled to vacate the house."

Another friend from Sibsagar (Assam) reported: "There is an interesting case of spirit in the Lakhimpur district of Assam in the North Eastern Frontier. One Brahmin, Denti Sarma by name died of cholera a few months ago in a village near North Lakhimpur town, Assam. Since the time of his death, there are regular throwings of stones and other materials in the family. The deceased has a son. One day while the son was resting in his room at night the spirit came to him and addressed his son thus, 'My son, call my friends so and so to our home tomorrow as I have to tell them something.' The voice was not uttered in a dream and the son could hear the voice of his father and recognised it as that of his father. Next day one of his friends came as requested by the spirit and waited to hear his word. The spirit again delivered the message at night thus, 'Dear friends, I am the spirit of Denti Sarma, your friend. I died of cholera. You burnt my body. The king of hell Yama sent me back saying that it was not the exact time of

my death. When I returned I found my body gone. Now I am a restless spirit. The dead do not take me to their fold, nor do the living. So please entertain some Brahmins for me if I can get peace of mind. I have got a body now but you will be frightened by its sight.

Many leading men of the village heard the words of the spirit for many days. Brahman Bhojan was done and the pelting of stones has ceased."

INTRUSION BY UNDESIRED SPIRITS.

In our endeavours to converse with our spirit-friends, we occasionally come across undesired entities, who interfere while others are communicating and even impersonate them. This is a great stumbling block in the way of some experimenters who are at times greatly harassed by annoying intrusions from the other world. For want of a good guide in the unseen regions they are much handicapped and feel helpless in the matter. It seems that these earnest persons are anxious to get rid of the undesired visitors, but no argument or prayers have any effect upon such denizens of the next world, whose intrusions are usually meant to harass those through whom they are communicating their thoughts.

A lady known to us while experimenting at her home for spirit communication happened to get into touch with the spirit of a gentleman who was staying in Bombay in the same building and had committed suicide. After his death he began to communicate through her and was to be found whenever she tried the Ouija Board. In spite of her persistent requests he would not leave her and would personate other spirits also. His messages were sometimes full of filthy language which no good spirit would ever use.

The lady prayed for him, implicitly carried out his wishes and faithfully conveyed his messages to his relatives. But these services, it seems, had no effect upon him and the lady felt quite disgusted with the spirit as well as his messages. In

vain she tried to free herself from this undesired entity which had become to her a great nuisance.

The spirit was a moneyed man during his life-time, and having lost his fortune had committed suicide nearly a month before. His death was a surprise to his relatives and friends who were shocked by the tragedy. The lady wanted to consult Oka in the matter and attended the seances after a long absence. She thought that the spirit also might be there, but it was not so and Oka said, "Call him here. I shall see to it." After a few minutes he was there and wrote, "Oh my Lord. I lost everything. I am going on as others. I thought that the lady knows the ways of communication, and so I used to go there. My son is a fool in not minding my messages. This is not my fault. I told you my thoughts. You see death is good for poor persons. When I was a rich man, nobody said bad words to me. People used to praise me of course for money."

With regard to the intrusion very interesting communications were subsequently obtained. It appeared that Oka helped the lady as promised in freeing her from the trouble and she gratefully acknowledged his services. Thereupon he said "I have been always telling you to believe in me. Nobody can do anything before me".

The lady again tried at home but experienced some trouble from the same entity, whereupon in his talks Oka said, "I have come to know about it. Why did you try at home when I had warned you not to do so? I am explaining to that gentleman. If any one were to impersonate me ask for my codeword "SANDAL" but I say "Dont try at home till I advise you to that effect. I am not permanently prohibiting you".

HOW TO AVOID HARMFUL SPIRITS?

In this connection the following message received by a friend from his wife will be found interesting. She said,

"People who have led a very sinful life on earth, are taken after their death to the lowest places of the spiritual world. There they continue to lead the same life of sinfulness which they led in the physical world. They do not get as much satisfaction from such a life as they get while on earth and thus they try to form a contact with your plane. They are the forces of evil that do a lot of harm to people. Their force is all the greater because people are more inclined to follow their lead than the advice of higher spirits. They are to be hated and despised for their low work of beguiling others. Higher spirits constantly keep an eye on such lower ones and try to dissuade them from their path. The power of such spirits may become useless only if humanity were to give up their selfishness and hatred for one another. Whenever man has tried seriously to overcome these lower spirits God and His Angels have helped him. Higher spirits keep a sharp eye on humanity and try to save it from these lower spirits. Your own will to be free from the clutches of such low spirits turns you to the good advice of the higher spirits. Your own efforts may guard you against such spirits and in these efforts God and the higher spirits will help you. Man is a free being and he has full liberty to go one way or the other. Whatever way he goes he finds those who may lead him that way. The human desire to go the wrong way gives a great impetus to such harmful spirits. They could be overpowered by the strong desire of man to be on the right path. Man may himself drive them away by ignoring them. Prayers and constant contact with higher spirits has helped many to get rid of them."

SPIRIT HELP.

The possibility of spirit-friends helping us in our difficulties was noticed from a message received on one occasion from Dr. Abraham. His brother Dr. Ezekiel had a wound on his thumb and he feared that it might become serious leading

to blood-poisoning. The usual medical treatment was followed and the wound was healed within a fortnight. Dr. Abraham, his brother in the spirit-world when asked as to whether any help was rendered by him in effecting the cure stated that he used to hold an herb before his brother's nose when the latter was asleep. This greatly expedited, as the spirit said, the healing of the wound. The message was quite unexpected particularly because it was delivered by a spirit who was himself a medical man.

MATERIALISATION PHENOMENA.

A sitter narrated to us a very strange experience which she had regarding the materialisation of a spirit. She stated that she saw in her house a figure like that of a beggar woman. It was as clear and life-like as that of a living human being. At the outset she thought that some one might have come to beg at her door and remonstrated with her under that supposition. But after a short time the figure vanished and there was no body to be seen at the place. That was a novel experience and the first of its kind in her life time. It was confirmed by another relative of hers who also saw the figure on another occasion. So there can be no doubt of the reality of the phenomena, as two independent witnesses corroborated the fact.

The late Mr. V. G. Apte, a well-known author from Poona, reported to us that on two occasions he could have the vision and a face to face talk with his deceased daughter. A year after her death, the spirit manifested in the early hours of the morning and sat on a chair just opposite to him. At first he was puzzled by the vision, but having clearly perceived the figure he was tempted to put questions to her, which strange as it may seem, were answered by the spirit. She narrated how she was induced to visit her home, inquired about her father's health, but seemed disin-

clined to see any of her other relatives. She stated that they were not fit to see her, but could not explain the cause of their incapacity.

A friend from Ambala reported the following experience which he had in connection with his departed wife. On one occasion she had given some consoling messages to him and it seemed that she was anxious to give more proofs of her existence. He wrote, "One night I was lying in the bed at about 11 o'clock with my eyes shut. Actually I was not sleeping but waking and I felt that somebody lifted the mosquito-net and to my astonishment I found that she was my wife. I enquired from her as to what she wanted, but when I opened my eyes I found nobody."

A SPIRIT'S RING.

We were once told about a spirit by another familiar entity that the former had a small box with a blue ring in it. It was stated that he had kept it with him as in his opinion it would ward off all troubles. The information was quite surprising and unexpected. Some persons have a belief that such articles can ward off calamities, and the same idea being carried over, an individual may possess such articles of etheric matter, as the counterparts of some of our desired objects can be found in the next world.

A CURIOUS COMMUNICATION.

The interest of the sitters was unexpectedly roused one evening by a spirit who came to communicate after about nine years. He was a Mohamedan spirit and had sometimes conversed with us when we were at Indore. His grave was just beneath the house in which we were living and he had given a funny name 'Kal-ki-Dupher' (Yesterday's noon). That evening when none of us had the least idea he made his appearance and wrote his message in fine Hindi. One

of the sitters asked him to explain the reason why he had assumed such a funny name, whereupon he gave a long explanation pointing out the circumstances which led him to be called like that. He said, "I was born at 12 noon. I had an uncle who had no information about my birth. Next morning when uncle came and inquired from father "What is the news?" He replied, "It is ready, Do you want to see?" He was of a humorous temperament and in reply to my uncle's question told him Kal-Ki-Dufer. Since then I have been known by that name."

When asked as to how he happened to come at that hour he replied that he was casually passing that way and stepped in having heard our invocation. We were having a general evocation, and it seems that the thoughts of the sitters produced a ringing analogous to that of the ringing of a Telephone. The entire communication greatly impressed all the sitters, who, a few minutes before, were much discouraged owing to the absence of any marked phenomena.

A WIFE'S UNABATED LOVE.

The unabated love and anxiety of a wife was noticed in a seance when she expressed that she was very sorry for her inability to serve him fully during her life time. She said that she was praying for his happiness and welfare. She desired that her husband should try to communicate with her at least once a week and gave him some remarkable hints regarding the conduct of one of his relatives. The seance was held in the room in which she was living, and she said "This is my room. Is it not?" As the sitting was held after a very long period extending over several months, we thought that she might not have come during the interval. But to our great surprise we found from her statement that she had visited her husband eighteen days before the seance. It is very deplorable that the living should be indifferent

towards the dead. The latter never forget their dear ones and occasionally visit them, although we are not aware of them.

TOUCHING COMMUNICATIONS.

A Parsi gentleman who had the misfortune of losing his wife, under very tragic circumstances, attempted to communicate with her and got very good results. The spirit proved her existence in a striking manner when the loving husband, with tears in his eyes spoke to her that he was feeling all alone. She replied, "How do you say so when I am always with you? First stop your tears and I shall say something more. I am greatly pained to see your grief. I am very anxious for you. I do not want anything to be done for my sake. I want only the same love. I pray for myself as well as for you. The unsuccessful operation was due to my misfortune as well as yours." A peculiar feature of the seance was that several times the Indicator used to move towards the gentleman with great force and the spirit was unwilling to close the conversation for a long time.

EAGERNESS OF COMMUNICATION.

The eagerness of spirits to communicate with their friends on earth is experienced on several occasions. It is to be regretted that the majority of people do not realise this grand truth. On one occasion a spirit implored his son to try once a week at least to communicate with him. When his son expressed the difficulty of want of time he suggested that if he could not sit himself he may try through his brother who had more leisure. Such incidents are quite common in Spiritualism and hence, the Spiritualists always insist upon not forgetting our beloved dead.

DIAGNOSIS BY A SPIRIT-DOCTOR.

Dr. Abraham, a spirit doctor, when requested to diagnose the disease of a patient asked the gentleman to keep his legs

straight and palms of his hand upside down. Having done this he advised us to wait for five minutes so that he might examine him. After the interval he said, "Yes, I have seen him. I may say that his disease would not be radically cured, but he may have temporary relief if he tries the following treatment." Thereupon he suggested some salts and the way in which their doses were to be taken. All the sitters agreed about the utility of the prescribed treatment.

The patient had been suffering for several years from gastric troubles and no living doctor had been able to relieve his acute pain. The spirit added that the trouble was due to the strain caused to the skin by the accumulation of gases in the stomach and not to any organic disorder.

A MOTHER'S INSISTENCE.

The mother of one of the sitters insisted so much upon his marriage that she would not allow the seance to be closed until she got an assurance from him that he would marry this year. No argument could induce her to change her mind and she would not allow him even a week to deliberate over the matter. The seance lasted for over an hour during which period, she evinced her interest in her son by mentioning several facts of her identity.

EXPERIMENT WITH CALL-BELL.

For a long time no experiments could be held with the apparatus as the necessary changes were being made in it as suggested by our spirit friends as well as the living ones. When it was ready Adi promised to ring the Bell while it was covered with glass-case. The cover is intended to prevent any air from interfering with the phenomena. He said that it would take about fifteen minutes to ring it. We waited for the period but there was no ringing although all the sitters nearly fifteen in number, were earnestly waiting for it. He was then requested to try while the glass-case was

taken off from the apparatus. All the windows in the room were closed in order to stop the outside air and noise, when after fifteen minutes the Bell rang to the satisfaction of all the sitters. It rang about half a dozen times and was heard by all the persons in the room who were quite convinced about the genuineness of the phenomena.

After we had closed the seance and all the visitors had left, the Bell rang once while the glass-case was on it. It was very evidential and we thought our spirit-friend Oka, might have come. He was earnestly expected at the seance by all the sitters, but was somehow absent. On resorting to the Ouija-Board it was found that he was there and had waited for over twenty minutes. As there was no idea about his coming after the seance was closed he tried to ring the Bell and thus indicated his presence. But for the ringing, it would have been impossible for us to know his coming. The aim of the Call-Bell was thus amply justified by the phenomena which we could witness so far. He said that he was busy and hence could not come at the time of the seance.

On one occasion we were surprised to hear the ringing of the bell at 3—30 a. m. The apparatus was covered in the glass-case and still the ringing commenced and continued till about fifteen strokes were distinctly counted. We were fast asleep along with three other guests at that calm hour of the morning when the ringing commenced. At first it was thought that the sound might be due to the hour-strokes of some clock, but when it went on for more than five or six times all the persons in the room woke up with great astonishment, and began to ask one another about it. Everybody was quite convinced about the automatic ringing of the Bell and it was evident that some spirit was trying to indicate its presence at that early hour of the morning. Fifteen times the Bell rang and stopped of

its own accord, causing a great surprise to all the inmates of the room.

Next morning at about seven O'clock, Ouija Board was tried when Subhadrabai was as usual the first to communicate. It was imagined: that she might have rung the Bell, but she replied in negative. Another spirit was present at that time and stated that he tried the Bell at that time and demonstrated his coming. It was indeed a novel experience which would bring conviction to any sceptic. Why the spirit chose that method, and how he succeeded in his efforts passed our comprehension.

The Bell rang again on one more occasion at 4 a. m. automatically just as reported above. This time it rang once only although we thought that the ringing might continue a number of times as on the last occasion. In the seance on the following morning we could not get any clue about the spirit who tried to ring the Bell. Subhadrabai stated that she was not there at that time and she had no idea about the experience.

On the eve of our departure to Sind, the Call-Bell was rung by a spirit known to two ladies who had specially come down to Bombay from Katni. The spirit was a lad of 16 at the time of his death and had been very active and intelligent. During our visit to Katni we had held some seances for conversing with him when he had strikingly proved his identity. The family made further attempts to communicate with him and got excellent results in their experiments. Prior to their coming to Bombay the spirit had told his mother and sister that they will be able to meet us, and strange as it may seem they came to us on the very day on which we had decided to proceed to Hyderabad. Just after their coming they inquired about the working of the Call-Bell, which being shown to them was rung repeatedly by the spirit.

HAUNTED HOUSES.

On one occasion in Bombay we had the opportunity of witnessing some phenomena which demonstrated the attachment of some spirits to the places which they liked during their life-time. A seance was held in a house ostensibly with the idea of getting into touch with the relatives of the sitters; but we found that the departed owner of the house desired to communicate and would not allow any other spirit to do so. Usually we get messages from our dear ones on the other side of life; but this was a novel experience. The house was purchased by a gentleman, and he never thought that the previous landlord would come to communicate in the seance. All the sitters in the circle ardently prayed that one of their relatives should favour them with a message; but in Automatic writing the name of the desired spirit was not obtained. In fact the spirit at first refused to disclose his name and pertinently asked us not to bother about it. He would not mind our requests and began to talk at random. After some time he admitted that he was the owner of the house and was very fond of the room where the seance was held. He seemed to be still attached to the place which he so much liked during his life-time; and that must have been the reason for his coming so readily even without any invocation. Very probably the other spirits who might have come there to communicate with their relatives, might have been prevented by him from doing so. He said that he did not want anything to be done for his sake, but was there simply out of the attachment for the place. He was a medical man well-known in the locality. Why he should have taken a fancy for the place is difficult to explain, but the experience was at any rate very interesting. The seance was closed after a brief talk with the spirit, as it was impossible to communicate with the desired ones.

Subhadrabai when asked about the above point said, "Such spirits are not always wicked. Many of them are good ones

also. What I mean is that those who still love a thing or place, stay near the earthplane and can carry on their daily routine. If any body goes to the place, they trouble him a little with a view to guard it. Otherwise they do not molest any one. This is due to their attachment for the place."

DISCIPLINE IN THE NEXT WORLD.

Oka had helped one of the sitters by punishing a mischievous spirit thus removing the trouble at her place. At a subsequent sitting we were surprised to learn from another spirit friend that Oka had to suffer for this benevolent deed. We could not believe this statement, but he repeatedly assured us that it was a fact. Oka was also present there and when asked to explain this mystery wrote in his humorous way: "I was continuously making signs asking him not to disclose the secret. But he would not even look at me. I am ready to suffer any thing for others. I would not mind any trouble for his sake. The reason why I was punished is that I as it were, took the law in my own hands and dealt with the miscreant without obtaining permission from the Guru. The laws of this world require such a permission before taking any steps. So my suffering was but natural as discipline had to be observed." Neither he nor the other spirit-friends would disclose the nature of the punishment though repeatedly asked to do so. It sounds very strange that one should have to suffer for such benevolent deeds, but we have to take the facts as they are.

CHILDREN IN THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

On one occasion a gentleman who had the misfortune of losing his child only four days back desired to know something about it which was only nine months old at the time of death. He was told that it was not possible to have a direct talk with the child, but information regarding it can be obtained from his deceased relatives. In the seance his father came to com-

municate with him and stated that the child was in the room and quite happy. He pointed out the corner of the room where it was standing which position was rather at a distance from the sitters. The gentleman's servant was in the room and it was anticipated that the child being very fond of the servant, it might have stood there, but he explained that the gentleman's deceased mother-in-law was present and had taken the child with her. All the information was of course quite incomprehensible and unexpected.

My experiences regarding the fate of children in After-life corroborate the one mentioned above. My dear daughter Pramila passed over when she was hardly a year old. For several years I did not expect that she would be able to communicate with me but to my great surprise one day she appeared and stated that she had grown up in the spirit-world and was attending a school and had learnt many things which to us seem quite unnecessary.

On one occasion we had an opportunity of inquiring about a child who passed over when it was only one year old. The bereaved parents deeply felt the loss as the death was tragic and sudden. The child swallowed a chestnut which obstructed its breathing, and collapsed due to suffocation. Life was extinct before any medical aid could be obtained. In the seance we were told by the deceased grandfather of the child that it was being looked after by its grandmother in the spirit-world. All the three had come there and the conversation was very instructive. It was stated that the child was crying and remembering its mother. When asked whether anything could be done to please it, the parents who were taking part in the seance, were told that they need not do anything and that Parvati (deceased grand-mother) was doing all that was necessary.

FATHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT.

For a considerable period I was longing to have a talk

with my parents. As they had not come of their own accord, I had asked Subhadrabai to bring them with her. They were kind enough to come with her and my father gave much valuable advice about personal matters. Among other things he emphasised the need of forbearance and cheerfulness. He reiterated that he was occasionally visiting me although I was not aware of it.

On another occasion he said, "You have to do much work. Don't be discouraged. Courage is the ideal for every one. You can understand every thing from this. Just as a Kshatriya's ideal is to show his prowess similarly courage is the goal for an intelligent and educated person. I am pleased by your work."

PIT-FALLS OF COMMUNICATIONS.

During our stay in Delhi we could once witness a tragic case of obsession which clearly brings home the pit-falls of spirit-communication. The following facts stated by the son of the gentleman will enable the readers to know the full story which is very touching as well as instructive. He wrote:—

"Two years ago my elder brother aged 23 years died leaving a widow behind. My father who loved him much felt this loss to a great extent, but he could manage to console his mind. After a year of his death he came across with a friend of his who suggested him to procure a planchette and told him that the instrument would enable him to talk with the deceased's soul. He accordingly got one and commenced practice. My younger sister of 12 years worked as medium. The spirit was called twice a day and my father used to exchange love talks. He also used to get information regarding the clue of lost articles and they proved to be correct.

One day the spirit said that, that day Saraswati and Lakshmi Devis were also with him and he himself had become god Mahesh. My father taking it to be true commenced preparing delicious dishes, and daily offering to above gods.

These dishes were placed in a neat and clean place and the gods were requested to descend and dine. After a while a message used to come, "We have taken and are satisfied and now you dine." It is needless to mention here that the quantity in dishes never decreased.

This process continued for about 3 months both morning and evening. Occasionally during the above period the spirits used to say that they would hold dance of fairies and we accordingly in order to please these gods used to join them by playing on music, and singing, but we could not see their dance or hear their music.

So far all these happenings proved to be a great amusement to all of us and my father was fully convinced of what was going on as nothing but reality.

He then began to sit at one place hours together and concentrate his mind on those spirits. In the office also he would devote some time and in that state of mind he used to feel that the spirit was saying that such and such sweets or eatables would be presented to them on that day. That was complied with accordingly.

One day at about noon my father when he was on the way home from office felt an inclination to go far away and accordingly he turned towards the jungle and reached a solitary and unfrequented portion of the jungle at a distance of 6 miles. In the way he lost all ideas as to who he was and whether he had got family or not. In the jungle he sat down, at one place and began to meditate. He remained there till 11 o'clock of the next day. What he felt in that state is a mystery as it has not been disclosed. He sat there absent-minded. However one or two things which escaped his lips are as follows:—

1. He saw the back of deceased's body and ran after to catch hold of it but in vain. The spirit disappeared.

2. Three men visited him and removed all his money, watch, fountain pen etc. from his pockets and also gave a Lathi blow which however, did not fall upon him as the same was checked by his walking stick which was with him at that time rising above of its own accord.

We after much difficulty could find trace of our father and brought him back to home. He did not recognise us at that time. Doctors and Spiritualists were called for to examine him and to treat him but the patient took them to task and they all went away. To us he said that he was J. (deceased's name) and would take care of himself. We did not care much further and father reverted to his previous state of mind after a fortnight.

After this occurrence he was occasionally seen to be talking this thing and that thing and saying that he was god Mahesh and that Lakshmi and Saraswati Devis were with him and that they would raise our family to a more prosperous state. In the beginning this state of mind lasted for only a couple of minutes a day but as time passed on, the time as well as the number of occurrences increased. Now for the last 2 weeks he, day and night repeats the above said sentences but he sometimes talks very seriously. All his movements seem to be controlled by some spirit as he does all his daily duties i. e. calls of nature and other things after he receives commands such as now the Mahesh orders me to do this thing. He refrains doing anything, even going to sleep if he is forbidden. When however he is in a better mood and is a bit late in carrying out the command he receives a very painful electric-like shock. He says also that they (spirits) would kill him.

He takes his food as usual but there is a noticeable decrease in the quantity. Occasionally he tests the food as mixed with poison and would not take it. He was not in the habit of taking meat but for the last ten days he demands meat preparations and this demand is complied with.

He does not sleep or say cannot sleep as his mind is also active. He takes his bath as usual. For the last 10 days he is more or less confined to bed.

My father is a graduate and is a Post-master. He is of about 50 years and possesses a good health. Many doctors and Spiritualists have been consulted but his condition is not improving. He rather becomes hot and enraged when any doctor or Spiritualist comes to him."

When we went to see him he was raving rank nonsense and seemed obsessed with the idea of unlimited powers of the spirits that haunted him. The most pitiable part was that in some moments of lucidity he was aware of his plight and would fain get rid of the trouble. No amount of persuasion or argument could influence him in any way and it appeared that he was doomed to suffer for what he took so lightly. The whole family was naturally stricken with sorrow as he was their main-stay. This is a warning and an eye-opener to those who try these methods unsystematically without caring to have some preparatory knowledge. It reflects no discredit on the subject but on the persons who practise it in an unscientific manner.

CAN ANIMALS BE EVOKED?

Some persons are very fond of their pet dogs or other animals, and when the latter die they naturally feel for them. They yearn to know something about their welfare and inquire whether their spirits can be evoked. A gentleman came to us and inquired about his pet dog, upon which we advised him to get into touch with his departed relatives who might give him some information about it. The evocation of the dog itself was out of question as can be gathered from the experiences obtained by other persons. The information about the existence of some animals in the spirit-world does not seem to be uniform but all are agreed about the impossibility of their communicating with us.

It seems that some animals have the faculty of seeing spirits, and other invisible things. A spirit-friend recently stated that he often visited the stable in his house, as his favourite animals were staying there. He added that they could see him and often bellowed at his appearance.

DYING EXPERIENCES.

A gentleman who had passed over about a year and half ago was asked as to what a person feels when he dies or is about to die. His answer was that the person feels drowsy for some time and he passes over in that state. Afterwards he begins to realise where he is. All who passed over have a guide allotted to them. He gives information about the next world. On being asked who his guide was he stated that they called him Guide because he tells them every thing about their place etc. in the other world. He added that some people are not willing to stay in the new world but that it was no use grumbling. They do not understand that it is better than your world. He said that it was his opinion and experience.

ENIGMATIC EXPRESSIONS.

(1) A spirit-friend while communicating with his son, pointed out several times the letters R. A. R. on the Ouija Board. This was naturally unintelligible to all the sitters who were puzzled by that enigmatic expression. But it was thought that he meant something by repeatedly pointing out those letters. After a lot of persuasion he stated that the expression indicated 'Reply and Reason', and he wanted to convey to his son that he should give replies to his question and reason upon them. That was very significant and showed the mentality of the spirit. The son was much reluctant to talk with his departed father as he was afraid lest it might disturb him in any way. The spirit also did not seem very communi-

cative and experienced much difficulty in expressing his ideas. But the above letters and the subsequent clever explanation showed how discarnate intelligences sometimes indulge in round about methods of expressing their ideas.

(2) A lady sitter after having conversed with her departed brother consulted him about her tooth-ache. He wrote 'BAW' which of course was unintelligible to the sitters. Thrice he wrote the same letters without explaining the meaning and eventually stated that he meant Brandy-water by that expression. It was indeed a queer but very evidential way of writing as it could not have occurred to any of the sitters. The spirit suggested that the lady should gargle her mouth by Brandy mixed with water.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SPIRIT BODY.

In a seance a spirit said, "My body is like light and fire. Different spirits have got different bodies. The difference does not lie in the form, brilliancy or shape but evolution. My body is much further evolved. The evolution is a matter to be imagined and cannot be described. The greater evolved spirits go to higher spheres. There is no bodily change in them."

HOW THE TABLE TILTS?

Regarding the qualifications necessary for good mediumship a spirit said, "The condition for the tilting of a table is that you must hold your hands lightly, and you must have faith in spirit-communication. You should think of the spirit you want and observe strict silence. Deep thinking, patience and other conditions must be followed. Spirit communication does not cause any derangement in the medium's brain if practised moderately. Allow the table to move in the direction it tends to move. This last condition is most important. The maximum time for a seance should be not more than an hour and a half." When asked as to how the table was moved he

said that it was done by the will power of the spirits working on the occasion. This explanation seems to be very reasonable and has been corroborated by other spirits.

A GURU'S GUIDANCE.

During our visit to Nasik, we could observe a remarkable instance wherein the departed Guru of a gentleman was found to be in frequent communication with the latter advising and guiding him in all his earthly affairs. Besides personal communications the Guru was reported to have done wonderful healing and rescue work, baffling the intelligence of medical men. The communications were obtained on the Ouija Board where a copper coin was used as the Indicator which moved by the hand of the medium pointing out letters on the Board. The operator was a great devotee of the Guru during his life time and his subsequent career has been also greatly moulded in accordance with the instructions received from time to time from his departed master. So far he had rendered valuable services to his devotee by mysteriously removing his difficulties and pointing out ways which would make his earthly life easy and comfortable. The Guru's benevolent guidance was not confined to one individual, but to almost all his large number of followers.

Scientific discussions were discouraged by the Guide who generally confined himself to religious discourses which were likely to uplift his followers. Nor did he allow talks with discarnate relatives or friends of any inquirers, and only guided in matters calculated to relieve physical suffering and other ailments. His followers implicitly followed his advice which sometimes proved efficacious.

During my stay at Nasik, I had a few chances of conversing with the Guide, but I must confess that they were very disappointing. I approached him with all respect

and politeness, but the replies given to my questions were not at all illuminating. Among other things I asked him the number of the plane he was living in, to which he replied that he was everywhere and the number of the planes was unlimited. When questioned about other spirits he stated that they cannot come there, suggesting as it were that he had monopolised the place for himself. This was to say the least, very discouraging, and I had no alternative but to close the conversation. In conclusion he, as is his wont, advised me to practise the Japa of Narayan for three months with a view to have a proper understanding of the subject. Sometimes, as I was told he advised the Japa of crores to the inquirers, and I was considered lucky in being given a short period with all facilities to follow the instructions. This must have been due mainly to the discretion which the guide might have used judging my attitude towards such advice.

A GIRL'S TALK WITH HER FRIEND.

One morning a girl participating in a seance ostensibly with the object of conversing with her deceased father happened to get into touch with her departed school-mate. She had absolutely no idea about her friend and her coming was a surprise both to the girl as well as the sitters. The spirit after writing her name described her dying experiences. She had passed away in Poona nearly two years ago, when she was studying along with the girl taking part in the circle. She said, "At first I got fever for eight days, which developed into small-pox. Afterwards it spread over the whole body and lasted for a month and a quarter. I passed over in that illness and suffered a great deal. I felt very sad at that time because I had no mother to look after. A girl who was my school-mate once said to me, "Go to meet your mother." Her name is L. J. I often remember that girl.

At the time of my death your father had come to take me here. He was accompanied by some weird figures. I am much angry with that girl. What business had she to say like that? I was very sorry when once our teacher told us to write a letter to mother. Because I thought whom should I write if I had no mother? Somehow I made up my mind to write, thereupon the girl said, "Since you have no mother send this letter to her in heaven."

INDIA'S PROBLEMS - AS SEEN BY THE SPIRIT WORLD.

The following is an extract from an article in the *Psychic News*, London dated 25th November 1944 given by Mr. Shridhar Telkar, the London correspondent of the "Free Press Journal" of Bombay.

"I was excited when I arrived at the cosy flat where the seances are held. The few people gathered there became my friends instantly. On the wall hung a striking picture. It was Silver Birch, guide of Swaffer's home circle. I was watching with keen interest the personalities in the room. The men and women around me were not peculiar creatures. They did not show any signs of being abnormal or eccentric. My talk with them convinced me that they were educated and intelligent. Such people could not be termed "cranks" or "hypocrites" or suffering from a strange mental disease.

A sudden hush—Silver Birch was speaking. There was a prayer by him first. I was struck by its simplicity and depth of meaning.

When Swaffer introduced me as a friend of Rishi, Silver Birch replied "I am very happy to have you here, my son. I have great love for Rishi and for his wife, for they are doing a great task. A small illumination in a vast continent of darkness. They go straight ahead turning neither to the left nor to the right, but always wanting to be faithful to

that sacred trust which has been reposed in them. One man against a continent. One man who thinks that so little headway is being made and yet all the time souls are being touched, freed from the bondage of ancient error and hoary superstition, helped towards the light of spiritual truth. It spreads and spreads. The little stream that meanders, gradually swelling into a river. One day it will become a mighty ocean. Yes, even in that continent of yours where so much is known about religion and so little about the truths of spirit. We see your world filled with human beings who can be turned into instruments of the spirit. Each is a harbinger or could be, to spread a gospel. And if each succeeds in bringing truth only to one, then at least there is twice as much truth as there was before. After all, if in your short span of earthly life you succeed in helping to lighten the load of only one, if you succeed in drying the tears of only one, if you succeed in lifting the burden of worry of only one, then at least your life has not been in vain. But, alas, there are many who, at the end of their earthly pilgrimage, have done nothing to help others. Don't you agree with that ?

"Yes", I replied.

I asked Silver Birch this question, "I feel that human beings everywhere ought to be free. My people at the moment are suffering a lot. The soul of India is in agony, as I see it. We have some great men in India today, great, spiritual men who are trying their best to bring the spiritual consciousness of our people to such a high pitch that they may have a reservoir of great spiritual strength, so that they may be free from British rule, and enjoy peace, happiness and liberty. Is there any method, any way, for our people to attain that state?"

Silver Birch answered, "There is a very fine man here, a fine spirit who says that if I say that you worship his

poetry you would know him." It was Tagore, our greatest poet, the man who inspired millions of our countrymen by his poems. "My son," said Silver Birch, "you must remember that your country is reaping what it has sown. The universe is ruled by law of cause and effect. My voice and the voice of the servitude of earth is always cast on the side of freedom, liberation and tolerance. But you cannot at one stroke solve complex problems that are the results of internecine war. You cannot free people who do not want any freedom except that which they say is freedom, for freedom must always be qualified, it cannot be unfettered. There is no such thing as 'free' freedom, for freedom must be restricted to enable others to enjoy liberties which would be infringed upon if freedom were completely free. In your country, for centuries, there has been the darkness brought about by allegiance to their own creedal beliefs. Millions have worshipped false idols to which they have given divinity and supreme power, and have refused to recognise that any other idols have an equal status to their own. The spirit, the human spirit, has been cramped, subjected and repressed. It has been enmeshed in complicated and complex doctrines that are bewildering in their tortuous conceptions. Now they have to be rescued. But you cannot undo the work of generations in one day. They have not yet learnt the lesson of tolerance, the lesson that every human being is equal in the sight of the Great Spirit, that none is the recipient of divine favours unless that one has earned it by a life dedicated to selfless service, that the possession of any religious label confers upon the holder rights of superiority and privileges which are denied to others. There is so much to be undone, for those who have dwelt in darkness for a long time cannot afford to have the full blaze of the light of truth. They would become blind. The task is for each man to free himself from the

bonds which are his prison. Having burst these bonds, he can enjoy then the larger freedom, the rights of others. India is a large continent and there is room for all. Once there is a majority who realise that there is a quality in the tie of the spirit that binds us all, despite creed and caste, that they are one brotherhood of the spirit, there is no power, no ruler who can subject such a people. For they would have arrived at the stage where they would demand the freedom which they had earned for themselves.

A few honest men with the desire to serve could cut through many knots and bring much light into the darkness. But they will have to rise above self, above creed and caste, and recognise in all simplicity and humility that each is part of a vast universe, and each has a part to play in it. So much religion and so much darkness—what a paradox! So much richness and so much poverty—what a paradox!"

"But we have a great many souls in India," I pressed, "men like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who are still in prison, detained for political reasons, men like Gandhi and other great saints. The people in India think that the whole question is the domination of one race over another."

"But that is not true," replied Silver Birch. "The problem does not consist only in what you call the domination of the race, for if that domination were removed at once there would still be no freedom. Freedom has to be earned. Freedom has to be won. Great reforms have been accomplished by single individuals, from the Nazarene downwards."

As I listened to the words of Silver Birch, I could not help feeling that there was a great deal of truth in what he said. I was thrilled by the wisdom of his teaching, his spiritual message for India.

So I end my story with this note. I am not a Spiritualist in the strict sense of the word, but my visit to the circle

was a wonderful experience. I am still learning, observing and seeking guidance. The road may be hard and long. But is worth reaching the journey's end."

CROSS CORRESPONDENCE.

The following are extracts from the book named "Voices from the Beyond" by Rao Bahadur M. Narasimham.

"This is the highest form of evidence about the genuineness of spirit-communications. Sir Oliver Lodge defined cross correspondence as "obtaining through two or more mediums at about the same time a message through the same communicator on any one subject. If a spirit-communicator gives a message through one medium at a particular place, and with the least possible interval gives the same matter through another medium at a different place, it would constitute first class evidence to establish the identity of that spirit communicator. The interval must be as short as possible so that the communicator may not forget the facts he gave out through the first medium, and also to prevent the possibility of any fraud on the part of two mediums communicating with each other."

I am glad to say that I subjected Nagendram to this test and got surprising results. When Mr. & Mrs. Rishi were here in August 1941, we were holding our family group-sittings along with them every morning. Nagendram gave a lot of evidential matter in those sittings, as Mrs. Rishi was contributing good power. At the sittings on 18-8-41, I asked Nagendram if he could give us cross-correspondence test. He asked what cross-correspondence meant and I explained the process to him. His reply was, "I will try." The arrangement we entered into was that after Mr. & Mrs. Rishi go to Ranipet, where my son Venkataratnam is living, to spend a few days with him Nagendram should give a message at their sitting at Ranipet with my son and

his family, and communicate to us at Madras at our sitting, the facts he gave at Ranipet. He agreed.

On 21-8-41, the last day of our sittings with the Rishis at Madras, I reminded Nagendram about the cross-correspondence. He said, "I will try as much as I can." I told Nagendram that we will hold a sitting at Madras on Monday the 25th August, and that in his message that day he should give us some facts which he gave in his message at Ranipet. He agreed.

The Rishis left Madras for Ranipet on 21st afternoon. They were expected to have sittings with my son's family there, but I did not know on what days they sat and what messages they got.

As previously arranged with Nagendram, I and my family members at Madras held a sitting on the night of the 25th August. I give below the relevant portions of message we got from Nagendram :—

Q. Do you remember we appointed this day for cross-correspondence?

A. Yes.

Q. Are sittings taking place at Ranipet with the Rishis?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you give us facts of the message you gave there?

A. Yes. It is about your book. I just mentioned about your new plan.

I "Now father, my thoughts are coming back."

II "Seeta is there happily."

III "I remembered some incidents of our former life. Told sister-in-law about them."

(Here Nagendram's wife interrupted him, and said, "Please say what questions they put you.")

"My Ranga, know that I too have bad memory *like you*. I am trying to give you something." (Nagendram did not miss the opportunity to give a hint to his wife.)

Q. Who sat for the sittings ?

A. " There was another stranger, but I don't know him."

(Later on, it has been verified from my son that a stranger also attended the sitting. This is an unexpected piece of evidence.)

Q. Can't you give any more details ?

A. Yes, but I am struggling to say.

Q. Is it difficult to remember your previous messages ?

A. My power is not sufficient to give such vivid details.

I must state here that by the time we got these messages, we knew absolutely nothing about the sittings, or the messages my son was getting at Ranipet, nor did any one of us at Madras communicate with our people at Ranipet, or vice versa. On the morning of the 27th, I got from Ranipet a copy of the notes taken at their sittings on the 22nd, 23rd and 25th mornings. On going through the notes, it was found that Nagendram succeeded in repeating to us at Madras on 25th evening, two points in his message on 23rd morning, and one point of his message on the 25th morning. Here are the extracts.

From message on 23rd. Addressing his brother, he said,

I " Please tell dear father that he is making a nice collection of our messages in a book form. *You should take this for cross-correspondence.*"

The last sentence in italics indicates that Nagendram wanted to mention this fact to us at Madras for the cross-correspondence, and he did mention it. After writing some sentences about another subject, he wrote

II " I will complete my message there (Madras) that dear Seeta is happy and very much pleased with her parents here. *I will try this here.*"

Again, there was an indication that he will use this for cross-correspondence, and he did tell us of Seeta's happiness.

From the message on 25th morning. In the course of his message he began to cut jokes with the child Seeta, and with his sister-in-law. Referring to Seeta he remarked:—

III “See the naughty girl.”

The mother of the girl (i.e.) his sister-in-law questioned him, “Why do you call her naughty?”

He retorted:— “Oh you are getting angry! The I say ten times ‘naughty girl’. I want to see you angry. See my dear brother. He never gets angry. I say he never gets angry with my vadina (sister-in-law).”

“How we were enjoying our school days”. (His sister-in-law questioned “Whose?”)

“Ours. I was going to school at our place.”

Q. Which place?

A. “At Rajahmundry.” (Sister-in-law again questioned, “Is this for me or your brother?”)

You were a very young girl, and I was a young boy. I was playing with you and others. I used to come to your house and we all used to enjoy well, and we were happy. Such days we never had. When I think of those days, I feel a thrill.”

These reminiscences of the younger days of Nagendram and his sister-in-law at Rajahmundry are quite true.

At the end of the message, he also said:— “I am going today. Father expects me the same afternoon. The same afternoon, or rather evening, he came and gave a message to us. It will be seen that he told us distinctly about the three points contained in his messages at Ranipet although he could not give details. It is also interesting to note that the three points occurred in the message to us at Madras, in the same order of sequence, as at Ranipet, and I marked them I, II, III. This is the culminating unimpeachable proof of the identity of Nagendram.

A SPIRITUALIST'S MESSAGE.

A spiritualist and medium, R. V. with whom I conducted some experiments in his worldly life, was invoked by us for the first time, on 3-5-1938. I give below extracts from his message.

"I was thinking of coming to you for some days, but could not, for one reason or other. You too did not call me. I could have come if you had called me—I was trying spiritualism in your house at Viazag. Now I am on this side, I must help those in your world to get messages from this world. I remember it was at Viazag that I got married second time."

Then, I unwittingly touched a topic on which he was not willing to speak. I questioned him about his relatives, and whether he had any message for them.

He said, "I have nothing to be conveyed to anyone of my family."

As he did not answer my question about his relatives, I repeated it.

He replied, "I am requesting you not to ask me anything about my relatives. I shall be happy to give you other proofs but I do not like to be questioned about my relatives."

I apologised saying I was sorry to have unwittingly moved that topic, and that I drop it.

"I am happy that you leave me on that point. I am not concerned with them who feel to get rid of me. I am happy, dear sir, to have an opportunity to meet you like this. I will frequently visit your seances. I am bound, as a former disciple of spiritualism, to make your trials successful."

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